

R. Richards.

Caer Ynuch

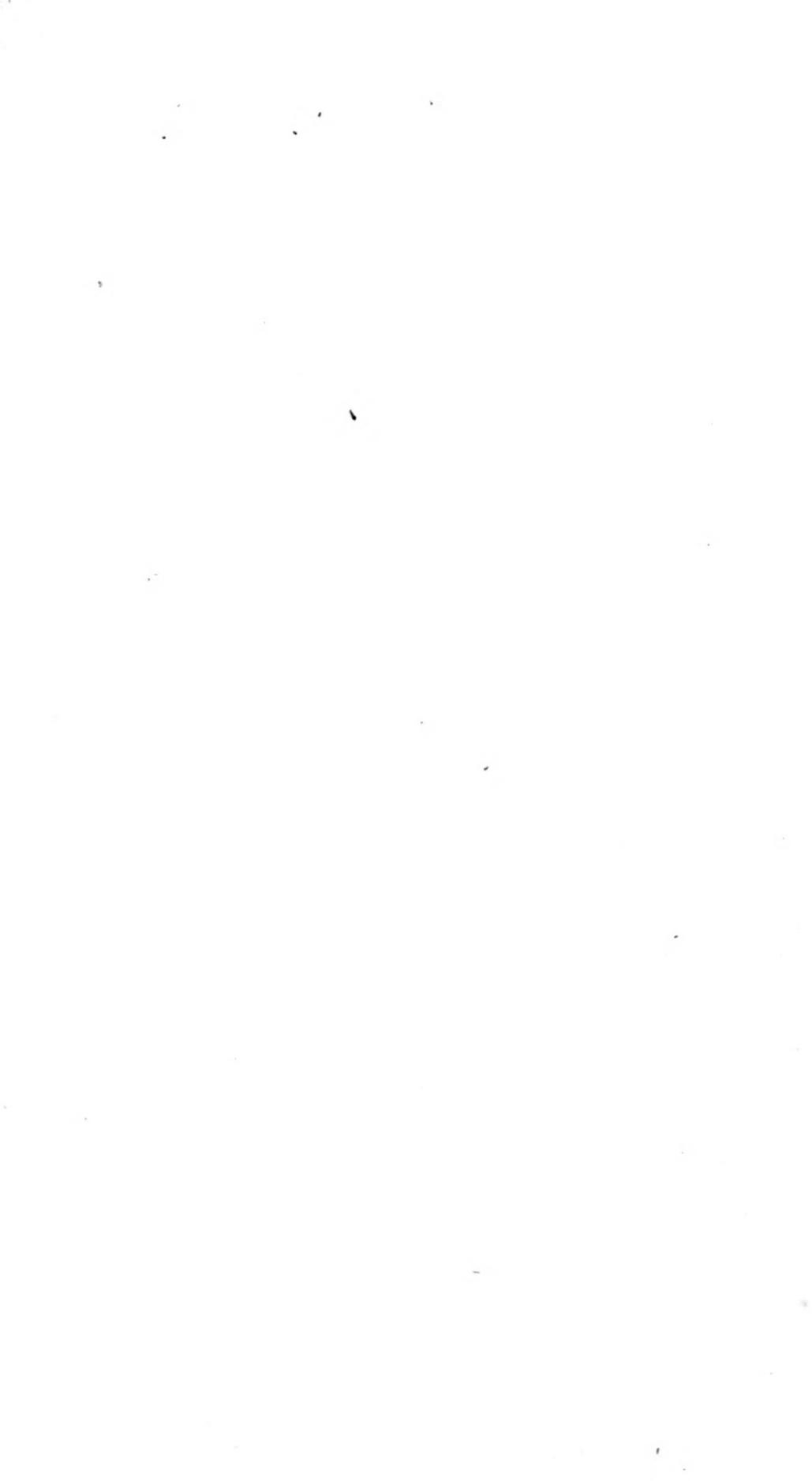




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TALES AND LEGENDS.



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THE THREE KINGS.

VOL. I

A

THE THREE KINGS.

CHAPTER I.

Hastings. More pity that the eagle should be mew'd,
While kites and buzzards prey at liberty.

King Richard the Third.

York. I will be King, or die.

King Henry the Sixth.

WHEN James the Fourth of Scotland met his doom on the fatal field of Flodden, then was strikingly verified the adage, “that the country is hapless whose prince is a child.”

During the minority of James the Fifth, the kingdom was torn by faction, and the dissensions of the nobles, and their incessant contests for power, rendered it a scene of turbulence and bloodshed. After various struggles, the bold and valiant Earl of Angus gained that perilous eminence which was coveted by so many envious and powerful rivals,

and his marriage with the mother of his Prince strengthened his authority, overawed his competitors, and silenced opposition.

Intoxicated by success, he neglected to continue those arts by which he had gained the affection of Queen Margaret, who, partaking perhaps somewhat of that love of change so conspicuously exhibited by her royal brother, Bluff King Harry, divorced the Earl of Angus, and, some time after, married the brother of Lord Evandale, Harry Stewart, and who was afterwards created Lord Methven.

But the authority of Douglas was too firmly established to be shaken by this event. He ruled the country with the strong hand of power, curbed the pride of her boldest barons, and king in everything but the name, he reigned with such despotic sway, as rendered the name of Douglas a talisman to quell sedition, and tame even the fiercest and most daring of the Scottish nobles. During his childhood, James was insensible to the bondage in which he was held; but when the slowly moving finger of time had written man on his brow, his proud spirit was chafed by the consciousness that the semblance of royalty alone was his, while the proud Douglas usurped his power, and grasped the

sceptre with a hand which seemed formed to command. Proud, generous, and high-minded, James writhed internally, and passionately longed for an opportunity of breaking the galling chain of subjection. This step he knew to be one of difficulty, if not of danger; and surrounded, as he was, by the adherents of the haughty Earl, caution and circumspection were highly necessary. Dissembling, therefore, his feelings, he watched, in silent impatience, for an opportunity of escaping from a yoke, which every day became more and more hateful.

At this period, the Earl of Angus, accompanied by the youthful Monarch, visited Jedburgh, to administer justice, and quell the disorders which prevailed in the south country; but here, as elsewhere, James found that the shadow of royalty alone was his,—that his wishes were disregarded, his commands disobeyed,—while the lightest word of Angus was a law which no one could withstand, without periling life and fortune in the bold attempt. The indignation of James was increased tenfold, on finding that Angus openly outraged justice, and that decisions were given, favourable or unfavourable, according as the parties were friends or foes of the haughty Earl. The forbearance of James being now exhausted, he re-

solved to make an effort to free himself from the dominion of this arrogant noble; and through the agency of the Earl of Lennox, he summoned to his aid the undaunted and daring Buccleuch. His mandate was promptly obeyed. This bold Baron, the chief of a numerous and enterprising clan, quickly armed his followers, and hastened to rescue his Sovereign from the thralldom which was so galling to his impetuous spirit.

At Melrose, the clans of Home and Kerr, and the Baron of Fairniherst, took leave of the King, and had been gone but a short time, when Buccleuch and his followers suddenly appeared on Halidon-Hill. Somewhat startled by his appearance, the Earl of Angus sent a herald to demand his purpose, and to command him to retire. To this Buccleuch answered, that he came, as was the custom of the Borders, to show his clan to the King, whose mind he knew better than did the Earl.

Incensed at this audacity, Douglas, turning to James, exclaimed, " Sir, yonder is Buccleuch, with the thieves of Annandale and Liddesdale, to bar your Grace's passage. I vow to God, they shall either fight or flee. Your Grace shall tarry on this hillock with my brother George, and I will either

clear your road of yonder banditti, or die in the attempt."

Surrounded as he was by the adherents of Angus, James, not daring to resist his commands, suffered himself to be led to a rising ground, from whence he viewed that combat which was to loosen or rivet his fetters. With eager eyes he followed the steps of Angus and his confederates, as they rushed to the onset. At the war-cry of the bold Borderers his burning blood rushed to his brow, his hand involuntarily sought his weapon, and scarce could he be restrained from mingling in the fight. The encounter was fierce and bloody, and victory still remained doubtful, when the Homes and Kerrs, recalled by the sound of the *mêlée*, suddenly attacked Buccleuch, who performed prodigies of valour, but in vain; and who, overpowered by numbers, spent with fatigue, and fainting under his wounds, was forced to retreat, and leave the victorious Douglas master of the field.

Equally fruitless was a like attempt made some time after by the Earl of Lennox, instigated by the Archbishop of St Andrews, and assisted by the Earl of Glencairn, the Master of Kilmaurs, the Earl of Cassilis, and many other nobles, who, chafed at the power of the Douglasses, rose in arms

against them ; but the fortunate star of Angus prevailed—he was again a victor, his opponents were defeated, and the Earl of Lennox lay slain on the bloody field.

These futile efforts served only to confirm¹ the authority of Angus. Many of his enemies were slain, others submitted to his power, and recovered his favour. Amongst the latter was the Archbishop of St Andrews, who was forced for a time to exchange his splendid attire for the homely weeds of a shepherd, and, under that disguise, (which, to render still more perfect, he actually performed the functions of his assumed character,) he found safety till the first ebullitions of passion passed from the mind of Angus, when the Archbishop, by the sacrifice of some church benefices and leases of tithes, pacified his powerful enemy, and procured his pardon. The greatness of Angus was now at its height. His retainers, kinsmen, and allies, filled the highest offices of the state. Every fortress and castle was garrisoned by his adherents, except that of Stirling, which, being a part of the dowry of the Queen Dowager, and inhabited only by a small number of her poor retainers, he had disdained to touch. This demolition of his hopes of freedom

raised in James's heart a tempest of grief and indignation, to which, however, he dared not to give vent. Forced to suppress his emotions, they preyed internally on his mind; frustrated in his endeavours to escape from thralldom, hopeless of succour, he ceased to contend with fortune, and endeavoured to hide, in bursts of wild and unnatural gaiety, the burning hatred he nourished in secret against his stern and imperious jailor.

Angus was too well versed in human nature to be deceived by the youthful dissembler, whose sentiments were known to him, but by whom they were wholly disregarded, as he was too sure of his power over his victim to deem it necessary to conciliate him, whose master he felt himself to be, and whose every action and movement he ruled with absolute sway.

Defeated and foiled, James was forced to bend to the will of Angus, and suffered himself to be conducted to the palace of Falkland.

The presence of Angus being now required in Lothian, he soon after quitted Falkland, leaving the King under the care of Archibald and James Douglas, who, assisted by a numerous body of the Earl's retainers, watched every movement of James, and, under pretence of paying him all deference and

respect, never lost view of him during the day, and scarcely could the King prevail on them to let him enjoy in privacy the hours dedicated to repose. This surveillance was keenly felt and resented by the youthful monarch; but on the absence of his arch-enemy, his spirits revived, and he signified his intention of next day taking the diversion of hunting.

“Will it please your Grace,” said the Lord Treasurer, Archibald Douglas, “to postpone your pastime for a short season, as pressing affairs demand my presence at Dundee, whither I must render myself without delay?”

“In sooth, my lord,” answered James, gaily, “we are unwilling to remain longer inactive as the sloth, and still more unwilling to deprive you of the sweetsmiles which gossip Rumour says await you at Dundee. Yet why should we not both enjoy our pastime? By our Lady, we shall to-morrow kill a fat buck or two, of which a choice morsel shall be laid at the feet of the fair dame who lures you from our company.”

“Whoever has so slandered me to your Grace—”

“Nay, chafe not so, my lord; we spoke but in jest, and meant not to blemish your honour—let the matter pass. Much it grieves us that we can-

not have your honoured presence in the chase; but without doubt we shall be well cared for—we have set our mind on hounding a deer to-morrow, and you must not baulk our fancy.”

“ Since your Grace will have it so,” replied Douglas, “ I will not gainsay your wishes. Lord William Douglas also leaves this; but I will give orders to my nephew, James Douglas, to see that all things needful and fitting are prepared for your Grace’s pleasure.”

“ Be it so,” replied the King; “ and command our Chamberlain, the Laird of Fairny, to warn all the gentlemen and tenants within our bounds to bring at sunrise to Falkland-wood their fleetest dogs and swiftest horses to grace our train.—What, ho! who waits? Serve instantly our evening cup—We must go to rest betimes, so that we may be winding the merry horn before the dew is off the grass. My lord, we drink to you—We pray you pledge us in a cup of Malvasy.—Drummond, the goblet to my lord.—Come, wish success to our enterprise.”

“ I trust,” replied Douglas, raising the goblet to his lips, “ that your Grace will meet with good sport, and that you will enjoy your promised pleasure.”

“Nay, never doubt it—we swear to you that the life of a hart of grece is at stake. By Our Lady’s help, there will be such hunting to-morrow as has not been seen since Scotland was a kingdom. But when set you forth, my lord?”

“In an hour’s space—the night is calm and fair, and the moon will light me on my way—but we shall soon meet again.”

“We shall soon meet again,” replied the King, “when each shall render an account of our deeds. Good night, my lord;” and with these words the King passed to his chamber, and soon after Douglas and his attendants issued from the palace, and pricking hastily on, were quickly lost to view.

The soft moonlight slept on upland and lawn, and glinted on wood and plain, where all breathed quietness and repose. Not so the palace, which resounded with the note of preparation for the coming sport. Domestics were seen passing to and fro in every quarter—the grooms hurried to the stables, and the huntsmen paced the court with an air befitting the important part they were soon to play in the approaching scene.

It was somewhat beyond midnight when two yeomen of the stables were challenged by the war-der—“Who goes there?”

“How now, Cuthbert,” replied the bold yeoman, “art thou blinded with star-gazing, that thou bids Jockie Hart to stand?”

“Fair and softly, my master,” replied the warder; “you pass not till I know where you and your companions are bound for.”

“Why, thou dolt, dost thou not know the prime sport that we are to have to-morrow?”

“I know full well that the King hunts to-morrow; but that is no reason why you should leave the palace at midnight.”

“But it *is* a reason, fool—you know this hunting-match was a sudden whim of the King’s, and that there has been little time to warn the bold nobles to attend. So Carmichael and I have the King’s especial order to ride by this fair moonlight to Auchtermuchty and Strathmiglo to summon the burly lairds—Bar our passage at your peril.—Carmichael, hold my steed; now mount your own and follow me.”

“In faith, my master, you bear yourself boldly, because, forsooth, you have gained the King’s favour; but what will that avail you? Secure the countenance of the Earl—that is the sure road to fortune.”

“May be so,” replied the yeoman; “but the

King must be master some day, and when that time comes, I would rather be the meanest hind in Scotland, than have one drop of the Douglas blood in my body.—But we waste time—undo the portal quickly; the night wears fast, and every moment is precious to those who have such business as ours on hand.”

Thus admonished, the warder unfastened the gate, the bold yeomen passed out, and the clatter of their horses' hoofs was drowned by the deep-toned baying of the hounds, and the boisterous mirth of the domestics, who sought to lighten their toil by jest and song.

CHAPTER II.

A maid there is in yonder tower,
Who, peeping from her early bower,
Half shows, like thee, with simple wile,
Her braided hair, and morning smile.

JOANNA BAILLIE.

Lord Douglas on a milk-white steed,
Most like a baron bold,
Rode foremost of the company,
Whose armour shone like gold.

Old Ballad.

ON the day preceding that fixed by James for the hunting party, the beautiful Maude Buchanan anxiously paced the battlements of her father's tower of Arnprior; but a brilliant mid-day sun glanced on wood and dell before that object met her view, which called a brighter sparkle to her eye, and deepened the rose of her cheek. The cavalcade, which now wound rapidly round the hill, and swept through the woods of Arnprior, betokened the presence of some distinguished chief; and as the party drew near, Maude, with a thrill of

joy recognised the bleeding heart of the Douglas blazing in the sun. She noticed not the attending train, the pricking horsemen, the sumptuously attired pages, the hawks, or the yelling hounds. Her beautiful eyes were fixed on one who rode far in advance of his attendants, and whose chesnut steed, panting and covered with foam, bore marks of hasty travel. His gallant rider was simply attired—a hunting-dress of green showed to advantage his finely-turned and manly form—a single feather graced his cap, and his bugelet horn, tipped with silver, hung carelessly from his breast. But no simplicity of attire could disguise the noble bearing of Lord William Douglas, whose dark eyes flashed with delight as he descried the lady of his love watching his approach, and an unwonted glow suffused his olive cheek as he returned her mute welcome. When his bounding courser stopped at the castle gate, Lord William bent his head almost to the saddle-bow, then springing lightly to the ground, he passed the opened portal.

“Quick, Eppie, quick!” exclaimed Maude, hastily, to her attendant; “bring hither my mantle. Nay, have done,” continued she, as Eppie attempted to arrange her flaxen tresses, which the summer breeze had blown into graceful disorder; “it

shames me to be a laggard in meeting my love, who has spared neither horse nor man in this hurried journey."

"Ye may say that," rejoined the damsel; "for the horses are panting so loud ye might hear them a mile off; and poor Bonnyblink looks as disjaskit as if he had come frae a foray on the Borders. He had scarcely enough of pith left to give me a glance up here."

"See that you treat the youth kindly," answered Maude; "he has Lord William's favour, and therefore must be deserving."

"He has my favour," replied the rustic beauty; "and I am sure that——"

"Give me my veil, girl," said Maude; "I lack time now to listen to your prate."

"Oh, my lady, stop just a minute, till I sort your kirtle;—and dinna be angry with me if I bid ye no be putting off Lord William, when he will be wanting you to name your wedding-day; and dinna ye say, as ye did the last time he was down on his knees to ye, that ye canna leave your father, and suchlike nonsense. Fathers maun be left—it's the nature of things; and there's naebody half so keen as Sir John himsell to see you Lord William's bride."

“ You speak truly, Eppie ; my father has often urged Lord William’s suit ; but the more generous he is, the more does it become me to be careful of his comfort. He has, unhappily, no child but myself to pay him duty, and I cannot prevail on myself to leave him ;—there is no haste, my good girl.”

“ It may be sae,” replied the damsel ; “ but I dinna like the sough that’s going through the country-side. Maist folk seem to think that the Douglases will get a downcome before long ; and I doubt, if Lord William’s braid lands were gane, that Sir John wouldna scruple to bid Lord William gang after them. It’s weel kent that the King is in muckle dool and sorrow at the strict hand that the Earl of Angus has ower him, and that a day o’ reckoning will no be lang o’ coming.”

“ Nay, Eppie,” replied Maude, “ allowing that Lord Angus bears higher rule over the King than he ought, Lord William is not to blame ; he stays but little at the court, as his uncle the Lord Angus fears that he favours the King too much.”

“ It’s a’ the better for him if he bides little at court, for it’s no very canny to have anything to do either with kings or courtiers.—But, gude pre-

serve us ! only hear how Sir John is crying for you to come down ; he seems in an unco fizzy."

" Coming, dear father," said Maude, as she hastily descended at the impatient summons of the knight.

" How now, Maude?" said the burly Sir John ; " thou wert not wont to lag when Lord William sought thy company. Wherefore such tardy welcome to our honoured guest?"

" Will you too chide?" exclaimed Maude, as her lover hastened to meet her.

" Have I not cause?" he replied, half reproachfully. " I may only enjoy your presence a few brief hours ; wonder not, then, that every moment is so precious to me."

" How fares the noble Earl of Angus?" asked Sir John.

" Well, I trust," replied Lord William. " His private affairs have called him into Lothian, whither he has summoned me to meet him ; he likes not that I should be with the King while he is absent. He knows it moves me much to see our youthful monarch mewed up like an imprisoned eagle, and but wound himself in his endeavours to escape from a captivity so galling to his bold spirit."

" By the mass," retorted Sir John, " but the

Earl knows bravely how to deal with friends and foes ! The overthrow and death of Lennox insures his power and greatness. By our Lady, the splendour of the house of Douglas casteth all other into the shade ; nothing is wanting to its happiness !”

“ Yes,” said Lord William, “ one thing is wanting to complete at least my bliss.—When, dearest Maude,” continued he, taking her hand—“ when may I hope to call this mine for ever ?—why will you so cruelly delay my happiness ?”

“ In sooth,” replied the fair Maude, drawing her veil more closely over her cheek, “ you know my heart has long been yours ; but I cannot resolve to leave my dear father, and——”

“ Away with such folly !” exclaimed Sir John, in an angry tone : “ you shall no longer trifle with your noble suitor, who offers you everything the heart of woman can desire—therefore I command you——”

“ Nay, Sir John,” interrupted Lord William, “ we will have no compulsion. I will not owe my dearest happiness to a father’s commands. Maude alone shall give herself to me.”

“ If she does not, and that speedily,” replied Sir John, in a menacing tone, “ she shall rue the day !” and casting a fierce look on his daughter,

the haughty knight strode from the apartment. Maude burst into tears.

“Heed him not, dear Maude,” said Lord William; “nay, do not weep. Wherefore this emotion? Have you not permitted me to hope that my ardent attachment was not displeasing to you? Have you not received and answered my vows of love? Come, dearest Maude, let me lead you to that blissful spot where you first deigned to listen to my passion. Let us wander once more through your favourite glade, and pause beneath that branching thorn, which was the only witness to our vows: there, perhaps, my dearest Maude may restore me that affection, without which life would be an unsupportable burden.”

“You wrong me,” answered Maude, as she walked by the side of her generous lover,—“you wrong me cruelly in thinking I repent me of my plighted vows. My heart was never more truly yours than at this moment; but——”

“Nay, not the charm of that avowal, by any chilling drawback,” exclaimed Lord William, passionately kissing her hand; “to tell me that I have your love, is to say all that I wish to hear. Say it again, dear Maude; and oh, tell me that you will soon be mine!”

“Hear me, William,” replied Maude, “and let me explain the cause of the apparent coldness which has wounded you. You know my father, and his passionate desire that I should wed greatly—in you he sees united every requisite to satisfy the most soaring ambition, and therefore he presses our union. I fear that it is not you that he values, but your rank and power; and I dread that the disinterestedness of my affection also may be questioned. Yet Heaven is my witness that the gauds of life have no charms for me. I love you for yourself alone, and my heart can never know change.”

“Beauteous Maude,” replied Lord William, “let not an overstrained delicacy delay my happiness; suffice it that I know the sincerity of your guileless heart. I shall never feel rest nor peace till you are wholly mine;” and Lord William bent his knee on the flowery turf—“Yes, soon shall we be bound in the sweetest bonds—soon shall I have a sacred right to protect and guide the dear object of my unchanging love.—What! not one little word? Must I be satisfied with a mute consent? Thus, then, I seal my happiness,” and Lord William imprinted on her fair brow one long and fervent kiss.

It was not till the shades of evening began to

fall on upland and dell, that the lovers could inflict on themselves the pain of separation ; but that moment came, and Maude repaired to the casement, to watch the departure of her lover, whose bugelet-horn quickly summoned his attendant; and followed by his train, Lord William again swept through the domain of Arnprior, cheered by the hope, that when he next appeared there, it would be to bear away its brightest gem.

CHAPTER III.

Warwick. I wonder how the King escaped our hands.

King Henry the Sixth.

The scene is changed, the maiden is alone,
 To brood upon Hope's temple overthrown;
 The hue has left her lip, the light her eye,
 And she has flung her down as if to die.

L. E. L.

THE preparations which Sir John was making for the nuptials of Maude were suddenly suspended. By noon on the day succeeding that on which Lord William left Arnprior, it was rumoured through the country that the King, disguised as a yeoman, had escaped from Falkland to the Castle of Stirling, and which he was putting in a state of defence. Incredible as this appeared to be, yet the numerous bands of horsemen which were seen at intervals hurrying towards Stirling, testified that some great event either had taken place or was in agitation. Impatient to learn the real state of affairs, Sir John ordered his followers to horse, and with-

out delay directed his rapid course towards Stirling.

In the meanwhile, Maude remained a prey to the most excruciating suspense. Rumours the most vague and contradictory had reached her. She knew not what to dread, yet it appeared certain that some great change in the posture of affairs had occurred. The downfall of the House of Douglas was openly predicted, and dark hints thrown out as to its probable fate.

On the evening of the fourth day of her father's absence, Maude sat mournfully at the casement, watching with straining eyes for the return of a messenger, whom she had that day dispatched for intelligence to Stirling. The sun had sunk behind the hills, and the night breeze gently stirred the transparent veil which bound her flaxen tresses, ere her longing eyes were greeted by the welcome sight of an approaching horseman. Eager to learn what tidings her messenger conveyed, she hurried down to meet him, and in another moment found herself clasped in the arms of Lord William. A few broken sentences only had passed, when Sir John burst into the apartment. At his sight, Maude withdrew herself from Lord William's embrace, and then, for the first time, observed the

agitation which was betrayed in the speaking countenance of Douglas, and in the gestures of the knight.

“Take thy last leave, Maude, and that quickly,” said Sir John, with sternness; “for every moment that Lord William remains here perils both his life and mine.”

“Take leave!—Peril!” said Maude, almost breathless from alarm—“For the love of Heaven, tell me what has happened?”

“You will hear it but too soon,” answered Sir John. “The King is in Stirling Castle, and ruin, irretrievable ruin, has fallen on the house of Douglas.”

The colour forsook the cheek of Maude, and she would have fallen to the ground, had not Lord William sprung towards her, and passing his arm round her trembling form, rested her drooping head on his breast.

“You are too rash, Sir John,” said Douglas—“Somewhat more of tenderness might have been used in breaking this disastrous intelligence to your daughter.—Look up, dear Maude! Let us bear our trial with fortitude—it unmans me to see you thus.”

“Hark ye, Maude,” said Sir John—“this is no

time for weakness and tears. Douglas must leave this house, or bring certain ruin on me and mine. I have seen the King, and have heard him, with the deepest oaths, swear the destruction of Angus, and of every one who bears his name. All are proscribed and proclaimed traitors, and, if taken, will too surely suffer their doom."

"Is it even so?" asked Maude, as she wiped away her tears.

"It is too true," answered Lord William; "the blow has fallen—the house of Douglas is levelled in the dust. Its power has passed away, and but to bear its name carries with it peril, disgrace, and death."

"Give me that name!" exclaimed Maude, while the blood rushed to her pale cheek and brow—"Give me that name, though it lead to peril or death. Never in the days of its towering grandeur was it so venerated by me, as in this hour of its blighted honour. Let me bear the name of Douglas, and consoled by thee, I will welcome exile, and smile away despair."

Overpowered with emotion, Lord William knelt at her feet, and bent his head on her hand.

"How now, Maude!" exclaimed Sir John; "art distracted, wench? Wouldst thou link thy fate

with a ruined house? Wouldst thou marry a proscribed and banished man?"

Lord William sprung to his feet.

"Fear not, Sir John," he said, firmly, "fear not that such a fate awaits your daughter. Never will I involve the woman I love in the calamities which have fallen on my name and race. Think not that a selfish purpose brought me hither. I came but to take one last look of all I hold dear, to render back to this fair and generous maiden her plighted faith, to snatch a last embrace, and to bid her, as I now do, a last farewell."

He held her for a moment to his heart, and pressed her pale lips.

"Maude, dearest Maude," he exclaimed, in a tone of suppressed anguish, "receive back your plighted word—from this moment you are free. I feel that you will long love the poor exile; but when time shall have effaced his image, and when another than Douglas shall talk of love, and recall your smiles, oh, may Heaven's choicest gifts bless your union! Forget me, Maude—forget me, and be happy. Farewell!"

"You shall not go!" exclaimed Maude, as she threw herself into his arms—"Ah, how can you speak to me of another love? No, William, no;

that shall never be. From the happy, the proud, the worshipped Douglas, my maiden bashfulness concealed the extent of my love ; but to Douglas, the proscribed and banished, I lay open the dearest secrets of a heart, where he alone shall ever reign. Take me, then, with you, dear William—refuse me not the consolation of soothing your affliction. Send quickly for the Abbot of Cambuskenneth to join our hands. Supported by mutual tenderness, we will brave every danger, and, happy in each other's love, we shall be so blessed, that the proudest coroneted dame in James's palace may envy the lot of the homeless exiles."

"Urge me not, Maude," replied Lord William, "urge me not. Such happiness is not for me—happiness did I say?—Misery rather, deep intolerable misery and self-reproach, would consume me, did I basely take advantage of your generous love. No, Maude, no—we must part."

"Ay, by our Lady, and that speedily," cried Sir John ; "unless that puling fool keeps you till the dagger's point reaches you in her arms. Be counselled by me, Lord William : Sleep not, rest not, till you are out of the bounds of Scotland. Where go you from this?"

"To join the Earl of Angus, whose place of

concealment is known to me. His conduct towards our King I always condemned; but although he has involved his race in ruin, I will not desert him in adversity, nor shall I leave him till he is in safety."

"By the mass," exclaimed Sir John, "he is more likely to be in safety than thou art, if thou dally long here. Fearest thou not to be so near the lion's den? If James at Stirling but guessed who is in his neighbourhood, we should soon see his archers bursting through our woods, and surrounding this tower. Be warned then, Douglas, and seek safety in flight. I wish not your blood to be spilt on my hearth. The night wears fast, and you ought to be far from this before the dawn."

"Go then," cried Maude; "fly, dear William! Alas! that my folly has held you so long near your foes. Leave me—oh, haste away! We may yet meet in happier times. Be careful of your life; for in death, as in life, I am yours only. Our Lady guide and preserve you—Farewell!"

And thus parted the lovers.

CHAPTER IV.

Why, what a madcap hath Heaven lent us here !

King John.

Thus sternly spoke he, mounted on his steed,
And to the northward spurr'd at headlong speed :
His troopers follow'd—

Craignethan Castle.

THIS afflicting separation Maude endeavoured to bear with patience and fortitude ; she was not of a temper to give way to despondency, and long she struggled to still her alarms, and to hope that some favourable change would yet take place. Fiery and impetuous as James was known to be, he was believed to possess a generous spirit, and Maude fondly hoped that, the first burst of passion evaporated, he would be accessible to softer feelings ; but when every passing day brought to her some new proof of the vindictive feelings of the King, and of his determined hatred to the

Earl of Angus, and of all those who were implicated, even in the most remote manner, in that which was now denominated Treason, her heart sunk within her. So deep, indeed, was the resentment of the King, that there was not found one hardy enough to intercede for the banished Earl; nor did any single individual of his former friends dare even to name him in James's presence, so that Maude, reluctant as she had been to part with Lord William, rejoiced now in the belief that he was far distant from her, and safe from the fury of the implacable King.

The violent alternations of hope and fear which thus agitated Maude's mind, produced their usual effect, and a severe illness followed. Maude, however, scarcely regretted her indisposition, as it afforded her an opportunity of escaping from the observation of her father, whom her sadness irritated and displeased. Gradually, however, her health was restored, and with it came some portion of her former spirit and vivacity; hope again revived, and she pleased herself with picturing that felicity which, she trusted, awaited her and her noble lover, and which would amply recompense them for their present sufferings. Her musings were not long unbroken.

“ Oh! my lady,” exclaimed Eppie, bursting one day into her apartment, “ such a sight as I hae seen !”

“ What is the matter ?” asked Maude in alarm.

“ Oh! my lady, come up to the terrace, and look out yoursell—I ne’er expected to see the like at Arnprior.”

“ Speak, I command you,” said Maude, becoming pale as death; “ Is he taken? Do they lead him to the scaffold? even there shall Maude Buchanan follow him.”

“ Gude forgie me, thoughtless gowk that I was,” exclaimed Eppie, “ to gie ye sic a fright! I might hae kent that your mind wad be aye rinnin on Lord William; but it’s no him, my lady—I wish it was, for we’ll ne’er be happy till he and Bonnyblink, puir chiel, come back again. But gang up to the terrace—Gude guide us, she canna rise aff her chair, and looks just like a water-lily. Just sit still, and she’ll come to you;—they maun be amaist at the gate by this time—she was cantering down the avenue as fast as if she had been riding to a bridal; her pages could hardly keep up wi’ her.”

“ For heaven’s sake, speak plainly, Eppie,” cried Maude—“ Who comes ?”

“Wha should it be,” said Eppie, “but your ain blythe cousin, Lady Dorothea Grahame? We’ll now hear a laugh in the castle, gude be praised. My face is grown sae lang, I’m feared to look mysell in the glass. Do you hear her, my lady?—if she’s no joking wi’ Sir John already! I hope she may bring him out o’ the dorts; I’m thinking he’s no ower-weel pleased wi’ your ladyship making sic a moan for Lord William. He maybe thinks there’s nae man worth sae muckle dolour,—and, to be sure, he should ken best, being ane o’ the kind;—but I hear Lady Dorothea coming up the stair, singing like a mavis.”

“You may leave me then, Eppie,” said Maude; “I shall call when you are wanted;”—and the damsel withdrew, just as Maude’s lively cousin entered the apartment.

“How now, sweet Maude,” cried Lady Dorothea; “does it become the daughter of the bold Arnprior to sit down in hopeless despair, because Fortune, that capricious dame, has withdrawn her smiles?”

“Alas! dear cousin,” replied Maude, “you know not all the misery——”

“I do know it,” interrupted Lady Dorothea, “and therefore am I come. Cheer up, dear friend;

—you ought not to despond: true, your happy prospects are at present obscured; but, believe me, the time will come when you will claim my promise, to grace your bridal with my presence. Nay, do not shake your sunny ringlets, and look so full of woe. Have you not deep cause for thankfulness, that Lord William has reached England in safety?”

“Could I but be convinced of that,” replied Maude, “half my grief would be removed; but this cruel uncertainty kills me. No tidings of his safety have reached me, and——”

“Ay, but they have reached *me*, fair cousin,” replied Lady Dorothea; “so recall your smiles. I knew too well the state of your silly heart, not to endeavour to find means to still its tremors. You may rely on my information,—giddy as I am, I would not for worlds play with your feelings on this subject. In truth, I but delayed my visit till I could bring you some comfort. Nay, do not thank me—the sparkle of your eye, and the bright smile which displays those dimples I have so often envied, would abundantly recompense me, even had I no other reward; but to my interference in your concerns I owe the pleasure of becoming ac-

quainted with the Master of Mar—Know you the youth?”

“In sooth I do, and regard him much,—he bears a fair report.”

“Ay, and a handsome person,” rejoined Lady Dorothea: “of which, however, he pretends to be ignorant. I marvel that he lacks sense to enliven the solitude of Arnprior.”

“This reminds me,” replied Maude, “of hearing that Alloa Tower was preparing for the Earl, and surely the Master is too good a son to allow him to sojourn there alone.”

“Perhaps so; and if he does venture here, do not allow your moody father to keep him outside the walls, for he it was who, at my earnest entreaty, procured me intelligence of Lord William; but I would not say wherefore I inquired so anxiously of the fate of Douglas. I saw he had some curiosity to fathom my secret, and took a pleasure in baffling all his attempts to discover it.—But, fair coz, do you mew yourself up here in your chamber all day long? If Lord William were to see these pale cheeks, I should not wonder that he recalled his homage, and left you to wear the willow;—all men are fickle and faithless.”

“Say not so,” replied Maude, with warmth:

“never will he change—I would pawn my life on his honour.”

“Every damsel believes the same at some period or other; I myself was once so foolish.”

“Ah, Dorothea,” replied Maude, “is it always the fault of the other sex when hearts are estranged? are *we* never to blame? What has become of Lord Maxwell?”

“In sooth I know not; he chose to make himself miserable, because, forsooth, I whispered James Erskine concerning your affair; and scarcely was this *brulé* past, when he took deep offence at my dancing a measure with the gallant Rothes. He vanished, and no one knows what has become of him. Some say he is in Fairy Land, but that I doubt; there is too much dancing there to suit his taste. I did shed half a dozen tears the first week of his disappearance, sighed all the next, then the turn of smiles came round again.”

“So you lack a lover, fair cousin?”

“Ay, truly I do. Is there any chance of picking up a stray one here?”

“What say you to our cousin Grahame?”

“Name him not; I would rather take up my abode in his dog-kennel—but now I mind me, that would not do, for he scarcely lives out of it.”

“ Does the young Laird of Arral please you ?”

“ Out upon him for a bold and hardened villain, who would cut a man’s throat one hour, and the next sit down to breakfast with unwashed hands—I’ll none of him.”

“ I spoke but in sport,” replied Maude, “ for, in good truth, you cannot loathe him more deeply than I do.”

“ Comes he often here ?”

“ More frequently than I wish. I know not whether the father or son is most hateful to me. They are lawless and turbulent men, who are always engaged in bold and daring enterprises, and are continually embroiling themselves with their neighbours ; indeed, their reputation for rapine and bloodshed is so well known, that when any broils occur, and we wish to know who is engaged in them, the usual question is, ‘ Who beside the Arrals ?’ for no fray ever happens here without their being engaged in it. But courage, cousin, we are near enough the Castle of Stirling, to hope that chance may throw a stray knight in our way. I hear that James holds revels there with his lords ; I pray Heaven that he keep within the bounds of Stirling. I could not support the sight of the implacable tyrant.”

“ You are less than just, fair cousin, and make not sufficient allowance for the irritated feelings of James. Bethink you how much he has suffered from the thralldom of Angus. But time will appease his wrath. Implacable tyrant!—sweet coz—there is no gallant of his court who knows better how to win a woman’s heart—nay, in spite of all your love for Douglas, I would tremble for him, did his princely master enter the lists against him. Believe me, James is as bland and courteous in a lady’s presence, as he is bold in the field and stern in the council.”

“ Dorothea, but that I know you are in jest, that speech would lose you my love for ever. But, dear cousin, I pray you, glance not that way again.”

“ Nay,” replied Dorothea, “ your rebuke shall not be unheeded—my heart smites me for my thoughtless folly. Forgive me, I meant not to offend.”

“ Think no more of it,” replied Maude; “ forget every word which gives you pain. We shall love each other no less for this passing cloud.”

“ I trust so; and yet I think that awful frown has scarcely left your brow. I knew not that you were made of such stern stuff. Sir John himself,

in his fiercest moods, never caused me to quail as you have done. How is this?"

"Perhaps," replied Maude, "because your conscience was arrayed against you—but let us drop the subject. Your enlivening presence and cheering intelligence have given me new strength; assured of the safety of Lord William, I shall bear cheerfully his absence. And now that my mind is relieved of its deepest anxiety, I shall do my best to show my sense of your kindness, although I fear I shall find it difficult to provide amusement for you."

"Give yourself no trouble about the matter," replied Lady Dorothea, "for I generally contrive to cut out amusement for myself. But I hope you mean to grace the board to-day—I am not ambitious for a *tete-à-tete* with Sir John."

"Certainly," replied Maude; "and as the dinner hour approaches, let me conduct you to your chamber, and call my attendant to assist in disencumbering you of your riding dress."

Sir John Buchanan gave Lady Dorothea a rough but kind welcome to Arnprior; and as he attributed Maude's recovered health and spirits to her influence, he exerted himself to procure her every amusement within their reach. Fleet horses were

at their command, and well trained hawks were carried out, when the ladies wished to take this sport. Nothing, however, gave Maude and her merry cousin so much amusement as exploring the hidden and remote beauties of the country, or cantering their horses over the barren moor. In these exercises, Maude gradually regained her health, and the rose again revisited her pale cheek.

“It is really provoking, cousin,” said the Lady Dorothea to Maude, as they slowly paced the terraced roof of the castle,—“it is really provoking, that in all our rides and excursions we have never met with anything more interesting than a bunch of cloud-berries, or maybe a shrill plover screaming overhead. May I never smile more if I do not ride to-morrow towards Stirling, and see if I cannot meet some of those gallants, who seem more fond of playing the courtier near our merry monarch, than of brushing the dew from our mountain paths.”

“In your enumeration,” replied Maude, smiling, “you have forgot to add the plant called the great sundew, which, you know, spreads out its leaves to catch flies, and then crushes them to

death. See you any resemblance here of your pursuits, fair cousin?"

"Not the slightest, Maude; for the sundew ensnares its captives only to destroy: I enslave for the purpose of cherishing, pleasing——"

"And teasing," interrupted Maude.

"Ah, cousin," replied Lady Dorothea, "I fear me all the dear delights of coquetry are fast vanishing away. I confess, with shame and confusion, that I care not to reign in any heart but that of the dear youth who has conquered mine; I have staked my all of happiness on one die. Tell me, Maude, did you ever think to see my giddy spirit so tamed? do you not pity me?"

"No, truly," replied Maude; "I rather rejoice that you are caught in Cupid's silken fetters. But tell me, dearest cousin, who has had the glory of touching your proud heart?"

"The Master of Mar is the wretch who has deprived me of my boasted freedom; but our attachment is kept a secret from the world at present, as he suspects that the Earl has other views for him."

"I am charmed to hear that you have made such an excellent choice; I cannot wish you a better lot than that of passing your life with the

Master of Mar, and I sincerely trust that nothing will occur to cloud your happy prospects.—But who comes here?—Look, Dorothea, at that cavalcade approaching. Is Lord William there? yet surely that is impossible; a mist comes over my eyes. Look, dear cousin, and tell me what all this means.”

“ Truly the mist must be thick, indeed, when you cannot see that the lawless Laird of Arral is wending his way hither. Can you guess his errand, Maude? It must be a peaceful one; for his train is slender, and he looks less the ruffian than usual.”

“ The Laird of Arral!” replied Maude in surprise; “ what can bring that man of blood here? I shudder at his sight; for well do I know that murder and rapine are dearer to him than the light of the blessed sun. See, he alights in the court; and there comes old Simon to usher him to Sir John. Do you observe, Dorothea, that his people remain on horseback, and seem earnestly to watch for his re-appearance? did I not know that my father is always armed, I would be uneasy at this interview. It is evident, however, that his intentions at present are not hostile—he is but slightly attended and armed—but this ap-

pearance of security and carelessness may perhaps be intended to throw us off our guard. I pray Heaven that no mischief may ensue."

"In faith, Maude, I am so thoroughly weary of our quiet mode of life, that I could almost be wicked enough to wish for a little mischief, just to vary the scene."

"Nay," said Maude, becoming very pale, "I fear you will have your wishes gratified; do you hear those sounds?" as the voices of Sir John and his visitor were heard in loud debate.

"In sooth," replied Lady Dorothea, "we cannot now complain of the quietness of our abode. Why, Sir John and his amiable guest seem possessed by the very spirit of discord. Only hear how they shout and bellow! The conference is certainly not intended to be a private one—But look, Maude, look, there is Arral striding through the court. Do you see how hurriedly he throws himself on his horse—mark you the sullen fire of his eye. There they all go—how furiously they ply the whip and spur—beshrew me, but they ride as if a coming thunderbolt were in their rear."

At this moment Sir John rushed into the court, crying, "To horse, to horse!" He was instantly obeyed; and, before the cousins had recovered

from their surprise, he had mounted his strong black steed, and, followed by his people, he rapidly pursued the road taken by Arral, and who was now completely out of sight.

“ Oh, my lady,” exclaimed Eppie, bursting into the apartment, “ heard ye ever the like o’ yon ! I thought they would hae throttled ane anither. There would hae been nae great matter if Arral had got his deadle, but we could ill spare Sir John in thae troublous times, when sae mony folks are fighting about ye.”

“ About me, Eppie ? what do ye mean ?”

“ Ye see, my lady, when Arral was ta’en in to Sir John, I thought I would like to ken what he was wanting ; so I derned myself into a canny hole, and heard every word ; and what do ye think the auld reiver came about ? Nae less than to ask you for a wife to his son.”

“ Impossible !” replied Maude.

“ Nae wonder than ye think it impossible ; I couldna maist believe that I heard him right ; set Arral’s son up with such a wife ! him that’s no fit to wipe your ladyship’s shoe. My faith, if Sir John didna gie him a screed o’ his mind ! he didna scruple to let the reiver ken what he thought o’ his impudence in speaking o’ his son to ane that had

the blood o' the Duke of Albany in her veins : and so Sir John blazed away about your grand kith and kin, and cast up to Arral that he was naething but a reiver and a robber, living on other men's goods. I'll ne'er forget Arral's look as long as I live, when Sir John was abusing him for a' his misdeeds. He grew black in the face with evendown rage ; then he grew white ; his een glanced like twa lighted candles ; and, before Sir John could turn himself, Arral felled him down as he would hae done an ox."

" Good Heavens," cried Maude, " is my father hurt ?"

" Dinna be sae feared, my lady ; he's no a hair the waur ; for though he fell down with an unco sod, and neither moved hand nor foot, he was soon on his legs again, and after Arral like a fire-flaught ; my certie, if Sir John comes up with him, his life's no worth a bodle."

" I hope in Heaven they may not meet !" said Maude anxiously ; " Arral is a bold and desperate man."

" Nay, never fear, dear Maude," said Lady Dorothea ; " trust me, they will not meet ; why, Arral was flying like a frightened deer. He will

reach some of his fastnesses ere Sir John can come up with him."

"Perhaps so," replied Maude, "but I shall be miserable till my father returns. I am grieved that he has incurred the enmity of Arral, who is not a man to forgive an offence, or be contented without a deep revenge."

Anxiously did the cousins watch for many weary hours; but it was long after sunset before they descried the welcome sight of Sir John and his attendants returning to the castle.

Maude hastened down, and, throwing herself into his arms, burst into tears. "How now, wench?" exclaimed Sir John; "what is all this about?"

"Dearest father, are you hurt?"

"Hurt! no, by the mass, there is nothing hurt but my good sword, which is somewhat injured by the vehemence with which I chastised that knave."

"Is Arral then dead?"

"By our Lady, I staid not to see; but 'tis more than likely, as he moved not on the turf when I touched him with my foot. His people threw him across his saddle, and I doubt not, his base blood will track their way. The knave—the robber, to

dare to aspire to ally his house with mine! No, no, Maude; we promise you a higher destiny. You shall have a fitter mate than either a base reiver, or a ruined noble. But go, child, go to your chamber, and think no more of the matter. The knave who insulted you, has been severely punished for his temerity, and that is enough."

Maude withdrew in silence; but her father's words alarmed her. It was evident that his determination, that she never should wed Lord William, was unshaken. To add to her distress, she had now too much cause to fear that he meant to propose to her another suitor; and although she was firmly resolved to keep inviolate the faith she had plighted to Lord William, yet knowing, as she did, the austere and violent character of her father, her heart sunk as she thought of the trials she would have to endure. Determined, however, not to give way to despondency, nor to allow her mind to dwell on evils which might never arrive, Maude, grateful for the unwearied kindness of Lady Dorothea, exerted herself to make the time pass pleasantly away. In this she was assisted by the Master of Mar, who, having accompanied the Earl to Alloa Tower, took advantage of its vicinity to Arnprior, to pay frequent visits

to his lively mistress; and Sir John, believing that Maude was the object of attraction, saw, with pleasure, an intercourse established, which promised a result so flattering to his ambition.

CHAPTER V.

Bonny Kilmeny gaed up the glen,
But it wasna to meet Dunelra's men,
Nor the rosy monk of the isle to see,
For Kilmeny was pure as pure could be ;
It was only to hear the yorlin sing,
And pu' the cress-flower round the spring,
The scarlet hypp, and the hindberrie,
And the nut that hang frae the hazel tree.

The Queen's Wake.

“ WHERE shall we ride to-day, Dorothea ?” said Maude, as the cousins prepared to set forth on one of their excursions.

“ In truth,” replied Lady Dorothea, “ it is a matter of perfect indifference to me where we direct our steps. Suppose we leave our palfreys to choose for us?—but pray, Maude, what is the meaning of our being followed by so many attendants?—why, even old Simon is mounted.”

“ Such is my father's pleasure,” replied Maude ;

“ he has heard that Arral has recovered, and perhaps he apprehends some attempt to be revenged for the chastisement he received. I understand, too, that several men have been observed lurking in the wood, and who have eluded all search; we shall, therefore, if you please, avoid that direction.”

“ Deed, you’re no far wrang, my lady,” said Eppie, giving her active shelty a stroke with her whip, and bringing him close behind the palfrey of her mistress, as the cavalcade issued from the castle gates,—“ for, as sure as my name is Eppie Donaldson, there are some uncanny folks ower near us. I got an unco fright twa nights since, when I was coming down the glen, with a grewsome carl o’ a gipsy, muffled up in an auld cloak, wha speeled down a tree like a very cat, and was after me in a jiffy, and shouting to me to stop; but, for as fast as he ran, I ran faster, crying for help a’ the road. But maybe the tinkler might hae come up with me, and got my bonny silver brooch, if Rory hadna come in sight, when the thief ran back into the wood, and I saw nae mair o’ him.”

“ Now, by my faith,” said Lady Dorothea, “ I am bent on riding that way, since there seems

some hope of an adventure awaiting us. You cannot dread anything serious, attended and guarded as we are. In all probability, we shall see nothing more formidable than an encampment of gipsies. Do let us go to the wood, cousin; I should so like to have my fortune told." And Lady Dorothea continued her entreaties and persuasions, till Maude, unwilling to disappoint her, yielded the point, and the party took the road which skirted the wood.

"Aweel, my Lady Dorothea," said Eppie, "I wish ye mayna repent o' this day's wark; but, oh, send some o' the men before ye, to look that nae ill happens to the Lady Maude, and I'll gang and ride beside Simon Brodie. My heart misgies me, and I canna help thinking that some mischief will come o' this ploy."—So saying, the damsel turned her pony, and, riding to the rear of the party, joined Simon Brodie, who paced leisurely along, while his young mistress and her companions advanced rapidly.

"It's an unco thing," said Eppie to Simon, "that young folks will no take advice. I canna think what has come ower Lady Maude—she'll no hear reason."

“ That’s nae ferlie in ane o’ her kind,” retorted Simon.

“ My certie,” replied the damsel, “ it’s nae secret whatfor ye hae such an ill will to women, and that’s just because there’s no ane will look the road ye are on; and nae great wonder, for ye are weel kent through the country for an auld, cankered, doited carl, and muckle are ye to trust to; grand care ye take o’ the Lady Maude, who is maist out o’ sight by this time. Ride faster, ye dour auld deevil.”

“ And so I will, Mistress Eppie; I wish you much good of your company,” said Simon, pointing to a man who was lurking behind some thick bushes; and striking spurs into his horse’s sides, he rode hastily on, while the gipsy, bursting from his concealment, crossed the road, and seized the bridle of her pony.

The terrified damsel rent the air with her screams.—“ Help, Simon, dear, good, kind Simon—help, for the love of heaven!” But Simon, lending a deaf ear to her cries, pursued his way.

On a sudden, the shrieks of Eppie ceased, and she was bending over her saddle, listening with open eyes and mouth to the gipsy, when Rory, who had heard her cries for help, appeared in

view, spurring on his steed to her rescue. At this sight, Eppie redoubled her screams, and tearing the bridle from the hand of the gipsy, who instantly plunged into the wood, she hastened to meet Rory.

“ Oh, Rory, man, I am maist deleerit with fright ! Did you see yon grewsome gipsy ? ”

“ Sure enough I saw him,” replied Rory ; “ and I shall touch him, too—stay here till I come back.”

“ Ye maunna leave me, dear Rory,” replied Eppie. “ I’m shaking like a leaf, and dinna think o’ going after him, for he has a knife at his side, as lang as my arm ; and I would be wae, if ony ill come over ye,” she said, with one of her sweetest smiles. “ Let us rather ride on, and get the Lady Maude to gang hame again, for this place is no canny.”

To this Rory having assented, they put their horses to their utmost speed, and soon joined the party, when Eppie appeared so distracted with alarm, that Maude and Lady Dorothea good-naturedly consented to shorten their excursion, and return to Arnprior.

No sooner were they alone, than Eppie burst forth with—“ Oh, my lady, what a blessed thing

it was that I affronted auld Simon, and made him ride awa' in the dorts—my head's in the mirlegoes, and I dinna ken whether I should laugh or greet."

"Indeed, my poor Eppie," replied Maude, "you seem scarcely to have recovered from your alarm. I shall dispense with your attendance; so you may go to bed, and keep yourself quiet for a few hours."

"Gang to my bed!" exclaimed Eppie; "there's nae sleep in my head, and there will be as little in yours, when I tell you what yon gipsy said to me. But what makes me haver about a gipsy, when I ken a' this time that it was nae other than Bonnyblink himsell—Oh, dinna look sae white and frightened, my lady, for he brings nae ill news o' Lord William, who is wearying sair to see you again."

"Where is Lord William?" asked Maude, in a voice tremulous from agitation.

"Where should he be," replied the damsel, "but hid in some canny place in the wood? and he and Bonnyblink hae been watching mony a long day, to let us ken they were there; but we had aye sae mony folks with us, that they didna dare to come near us. At last Bonnyblink dressed himsell up as a gipsy, and keepit watch near the glen, and he told me it was him that chased me the other night—little did I think who I was

running awa' frae sae fast. Weel, my lady, auld Simon and I had a cast-out the day, and nae sooner had he ridden awa' than Bonnyblink jumped over the bushes; but I, like a gowk, set up such a skirl, before I kent him, as brought Rory back; so we had little time to settle what to do; but I promised that ye would meet Lord William at my father's the night. I'll contrive to get our horses out o' the stable—there's braw moonlight, and we'll ride across the moor in nae time."

"Oh, Dorothea," said Maude, "what shall I do! counsel me, dear cousin."

"Do!" replied Lady Dorothea, "why, give him the meeting, to be sure. He has periled life itself to see you again, and well he deserves your favour."

"Why was he so rash?" said Maude, pacing the apartment; "what could prompt him to leave a place of safety, and venture here, where, if discovered, certain death will be his doom?"

"Well," said Lady Dorothea, "for my part I honour his rashness and bold spirit—Would I had such a lover! Confess now, Maude, are you not secretly pleased to find that he loves you more than life?—is your womanly vanity not gratified by the very imprudence you seem to condemn?"

“No,” answered Maude, firmly; “my feelings are those of unmixed regret and apprehension. My reliance on his love was unshaken—I required not this dangerous proof of his attachment. But we waste time; let us now consider how the meeting may be accomplished, with as little risk as may be to his safety.”

“If you can fully trust your damsel, I know of no better plan than the one she has proposed.”

“I could trust her with my life,” replied Maude.

“That ye may, my lady,” said Eppie: “I would lay mine down before a hair of your head should be hurt, and I’ll answer for my father and mother.”

“Whereabouts do they live?” asked Lady Dorothea.

“On the moor which forms a part of the Earl of Mar’s estate,” replied Maude; “John Donaldson is gamekeeper there—the distance is considerable, but I trust we may traverse it in safety.—Will you not be afraid, Eppie, when you find yourself on the barren moor, with no companion but myself?”

“Ne’er a bit,” replied Eppie; “I wish we were cantering there this very minute; but we maun

wait till a' in the castle are in their beds, and the bonny moon shows her face. But, oh, my lady, try and look as blythe as ye can, in case Sir John should jalouse anything, for he'll be crying for you in no time."

"I shall do my best," replied Maude; "and do you, dear Dorothea, assist me, for I feel but little able to support conversation on indifferent subjects."

"Never fear," replied Lady Dorothea; "I will supply all your deficiencies in the way of speech—you know I have a gift that way."

"Go then, Eppie," said Maude, "and make all necessary preparations, while we pass some hours below with Sir John;"—and the cousins descended to the knight, while Eppie hurried to arrange matters for their nocturnal adventure.

Her blandishments soon prevailed on Rory, one of the grooms, and her warm admirer, to leave open the door of the stable, so that she could take out her mistress's palfrey and her own spirited little shely, when wanted.

On going his rounds, however, old Simon observed that the door was unfastened; and giving Rory a severe reprimand, ordered him to lock it, and bring him the key; and this Rory promised

to do when he had suppered the horses. As soon as Simon left him, Rory slipped in to consult Eppie how he was to act in this dilemma.

“Take out the Lady Maude’s palfrey and the shely, and tie them to the white thorn at the corner o’ the wood, and gi’e the auld gowk the key.”

“But, Eppie, how will the horses get in?”

“Never ye mind, Rory, I’ll see to that;”—and, unable to disappoint his pretty mistress, Rory, although by no means easy as to the consequences of his compliance, hastened to obey her directions.

CHAPTER VI.

'Tis Simon's house ; please to step in,
 And vissy't round and round ;
 There's nought superfluous to be seen,
 Or costly to be found.
 Yet all is cleau : a clear peat ingle
 Glances amidst the floor :
 The green horn-spoons, beech luggies mingle,
 On skelfs foregainst the door.

The Gentle Shepherd.

His amber-colour'd locks in ringlets run,
 With graceful negligence, and shone against the sun ;
 His nose was aquiline, his eyes were blue,
 Ruddy his lips, and fresh and fair his hue.

Palamon and Arcite.

“ What are ye yelp, yelping at ? ” said honest John Donaldson, as his dog pricked up his ears, and began to bark loudly. “ I'm sure there's naebody coming here at this time o' night.”

“ Whisht, brute ! ” said Maggie,—“ I declare we can hardly hear oursells speak for your din.”

But Maggie's admonition, although enforced by the stroke of a heavy rung, had no effect. The

dog continued to bark, and in a few moments after the tramp of a horse was heard on the turf.

“The beast is right, after a’,” said John, whom a loud knock at the door drew from his comfortable station near a rousing peat-fire. “Who is there?” he demanded.

“One who craves a night’s lodging,” was the reply.

“Be ye gentle, or be ye semple, ye will get that,” said John, as he lifted the latch. “Maggie, woman, fling on twa or three mair peats.—Come in to the fire, and welcome.”

“With your leave, friend,” replied the stranger, “I will first see my good steed put up. We have both had a hard day’s work. I lost my way in the moors, and but for the friendly light in your cottage window, might have been wandering there yet. For myself, I care not—a bed of heather, with the starry sky for a canopy, would please me better than a tapestried chamber in a royal palace; but my good steed is spent with travel, and lacks food, which I pray you to bestow.”

“That I shall,” said John; and taking up a lighted peat, he led the way to the stable. The stranger followed, leading his horse. “Troth, friend,” said John, looking with admiration at the

fine animal, "your horse is weel wordie being taen care o'. My faith, he's as black as a crow, and as sleek as a moudiewart."

"He is not amiss," said the stranger, taking off the saddle.

"No amiss!" retorted John; "by my fey, ye maun be ill to please if that is a' ye hae to say o' such a grand beast. I dinna think he has his marrow within the bounds o' Stirling, unless maybe in the King's stables, wha folks say kens a gude horse, hawk, and hound, as weel as ony o' his subjects."

"So I have heard," replied the stranger; "but people do not scruple to say it would be better if he hunted and hawked less, for his nobles require looking after."

"And whatfor shouldna he take his diversion as weel as the lave o' them? There canna be a mair healthful thing than scouring ower the moors in a caller harvest day. I wish the King may never do waur."

"It's a good wish, friend; and I join in it heartily. But now that Rayner is properly cared for, I will be glad to rest myself in your hospitable dwelling."

"Come your ways, then," said John, as he

ushered his guest into the kitchen. "And now, gudewife," continued John, "gang ye to the bank, and thraw the neck o' the best hen there, and let us hae it to our supper."

"Troth I'll do that wi' right gude will," said Maggie, as she gazed on the handsome stranger. "Ye shall hae the best cheer that I can set before ye, and welcome."

While Maggie was engaged in preparing the repast, John and the stranger, drawing their chairs close to the fire, continued their conversation.

"You seem to have a comfortable dwelling here."

"It's a bit decent howff enough," replied John. "Ye maun ken, friend, that I belang to a kind master, the Earl o' Mar. I look after the game, and tak tent o' the moors; and ye may weel believe that I'm no idle, for there are ower mony reivers and lifters in the country, wha think naething o' helping themselves to other folk's gear."

"Have you no sons to assist you?"

"Atweel no—I hae naething but a deil's buckie o' a lassie, that winna bide awa frae the Lady Maude, Buchanan o' Arnprior's dochter. Our Eppie is just daft about her; so we let her stay at Arnprior and please hersell. We miss her sair, for she is a

blythe bit lassie ; but we get a gliff o' her now and then. There's a sough in the country that the Master o' Mar is unco taen up with Lady Maude. If it should be sae, I'se warrant he'll no want the King's gude word with Sir John ; for his Grace is very couthy with our Earl, wha was sae keen to get him out o' the hands o' the Douglasses."

" I have heard that the Earl is in great favour with the King ; but what say you hereabouts touching his banishing the Douglasses ?"

" Troth," replied John, " I'm thinking that the King might hae had a thought mair mercy to that ancient house."

" How !" replied the stranger. " Has not James had deep cause for wrath ? Did not they usurp his authority, oppress his people, strip his fair palaces and castles, and keep even himself a prisoner ? Have they not been a powerful and rebellious race from time immemorial ?"

" Nae doubt," replied John, " there has been baith bad and gude amang them ; but if the Queen had keepit hersell a douce quiet widow, the Earl maybe would ne'er hae gotten sae muckle o' his ain way. Maist feck o' folk say he has got nae mair than his deserts ; but there's a sair lament made for Lord William, wha they say had nae

hand in keeping the King in jeopardy ; but the clatter o' the country goes, that the King is just as dour against him as he is against the rest. Now this is no right ; he should make a distinction."

" If Lord William were really less guilty than others of his house, do you not think that some of his friends would have interceded for him, and have obtained his pardon ?"

" I dinna ken—I'm no that muckle skilled in courts, but I hae heard tell that there's no ane o' the courtiers daur sae muckle as name the name o' Douglas in the King's hearing—they're feared to anger him ; and ye see——"

John's speech was interrupted by Maggie, who said—" John, man, ye maun gang to the laft and bring down some hay for the cow."

" Can ye no gang up yoursell, Maggie ?" replied John.

" Deed no, I'm thrang pooking the hen ; so take the light, John, for it's time the beast had her supper."

As there was no disputing this fact, John went off on this mission, and Maggie also absenting herself on some household avocation, the stranger was left alone. His meditations, however, were quickly broken—a small white hand was laid on his

shoulder, and a voice sweet as the shepherd's pipe, said, "Ah, dearest William, do we then meet again!"

The stranger, thus addressed, turned hastily round to the speaker. On discovering her mistake, Maude, uttering a faint exclamation, shrunk behind Eppie, who, nothing daunted, returned the stranger gaze for gaze.

"Two pretty maids, by the mass," said he, rising and approaching them. "Nay," continued he, observing Maude's hurried endeavour to draw her plaid over her head, "why will you hide those beauteous flaxen tresses?—I pray you, pretty maiden——"

"My certie, friend," interrupted Eppie, "but ye're no blate to speak that gate."

"Hush, Eppie," whispered Maude; "the fault was mine—I mistook him for William."

"Perhaps, sweet damsel," said the stranger, "my name may be William also."

"What's that to us?" replied Eppie; "we care na a bodle what they ca' ye; but I wonder what right ye hae to be sitting sae crously at my father's ingle-check."

"There is room for us all, my dear," said the stranger.

“*Dinna dear me,*” retorted Eppie.

“Silence, Eppie,” said Maude, “and let us to the spence;” and in another instant they disappeared from the admiring gaze of the stranger, who muttered—“Friend John, thou hast more game to look after than I dreamt of; but I’ll see the end of this.”

When John returned, he found that his guest had altered his position, and now sat facing the door of the spence, as if expecting some one to issue from it.

“I wonder what’s come o’ Maggie,” said John; “she might hae pookit six hens by this time.”

“Come ben this way, gudeman,” cried Maggie, from the spence; “here’s Eppie come ower to see us.”

“Come ower to see us!” exclaimed John, as he rose from his chair and proceeded to the spence; “is the lassie daft, to come ower the moor at this time o’ night?”

The stranger listened attentively, but as the party within conversed in a low whisper, his curiosity as to the subject of their discourse remained ungratified. John re-appeared in a short time, saying, “That glaiket thing Eppie, and a friend o’ hers, hae come ower to see us—I was feared Lady

Maude would miss her and be angry; but she said she had her leave to come, so there's nae harm done."

"Why, Eppie," said Maude, as soon as they reached the spence, "why did you speak so sharply to the stranger?"

"My word," retorted the damsel, "he got far less than he deserved—he glowered at us as if we had been twa worricows, and spoke as free to your ladyship as if ye had been a cottar's dochter. If Lord William had seen him, he would have thought little to hae put his dirk in him."

"I charge you, Eppie, as you value my favour, mention him not to Lord William—We must keep them from meeting—the stranger is no mean person, and perhaps may recognise and betray Lord William."

"I canna think he is ony great things," replied Eppie; "a grey doublet and mantle is fit neither for lord nor knight. I trow he's but a weel-faured serving-man, wha has gotten a gliff o' gentility with copying his master. Saw ye ever such a pair o' blue een?—and, oh, but he has a frank, winsome smile! I couldna find in my heart to be angry with him even when I was pretending to scold him. But I'll awa and get a bit fire, for this place is unco

cauld, and I maun try and get Lord William through the kitchen without being seen by that man's gleg een ;" and away went Eppie to the kitchen.—“ I think,” said she, in a coaxing tone to the stranger, “ you would be mair comfortable ower here,” placing, as she spoke, a chair with its back to the spence.

“ I thank you, my pretty damsel, I sit very well ; but pray, what have you done with your companion ? there seems to be something extraordinary going on here to-night.”

“ Ay, ay, mair than the King kens,” replied Eppie, gaily, as she scooped away half of the fire with an old shovel, and walked off with her prize. She returned in a few moments, and throwing on fresh fuel, put the bellows into the stranger's hand and coolly bid him “ gie the fire a bit blaw.”

“ By our Lady,” said the stranger, “ but thou art a smart wench ; but I'll do thy bidding for love of your merry eye.”

“ Dear me, Eppie,” said Maggie, “ ye havena left as muckle fire as will roast a sparrow, far less a gude fat hen.”

“ Never mind, dame,” said the stranger, good-humouredly, and plying the bellows, “ I will do

my best to make your fire burn as brightly as ever.”

But the stranger paid dearly for his courtesy, for, while engaged in repairing the devastations of Eppie, that expert damsel had hung her cloak across the rattle-tree, and under cover of its friendly shade, some one stole quickly into the spence. The stranger started and looked round, but the cloak hung so low as to screen entirely the person of the intruder, except the booted leg and spur. The stranger cast a searching glance at Eppie, who returned it with a saucy smile, and a look of perfect coolness and composure, although internally far from easy on finding every word and motion closely watched by their unwelcome guest ; and being apprehensive that he might overhear the conference of her lady and Lord William, she, under pretence of assisting in the preparations for supper, raised such a clatter among the dishes as effectually drowned all other sounds. The stranger looked equally provoked and diverted, and appeared to derive much amusement from watching the manœuvres of Eppie, who no sooner saw them all seated round the board, than, hastening into the spence, she whispered to Maude,—
“ Oh, my lady, for the love o’ Heaven, let us get

Lord William out o' this house—I'm certain sure that young deevil in the kitchen is bent on finding out baith wha ye are, and what brings you here—he watches the door of the spence like a cat watching a mouse; and if he should see Lord William, there's nae saying what may happen."

"What can be done, Eppie?" asked Maude; "I am in agonies how to prevent a meeting between them."

"I think we had best make for hame as fast as we can; Bonnyblink is hauding our horses and Lord William's, at the back of the dyke; so we'll a' just slip out at the window, and be off before we can be missed—I told my mother what I feared, and bid her keep him at his supper as long as she could."

Unwilling as the lovers were to part, they were too well aware of the danger with which a discovery would be attended, to hesitate as to the course to be pursued. Lord William leaped lightly from the window, softly assisted Maude, and, followed by Eppie, they stole to the place where waited Bonnyblink with the steeds, and mounting hastily, they rapidly pursued their way. Cautious, however, as were their movements, the quick ear of the stranger had detected the sound of their

flight, and he fancied he heard a horse's tramp; but concealing his feelings, he affected to be overpowered with sleep and fatigue, and requested to be shown to his bed-chamber, to which he was accompanied by honest John, who, after wishing him a comfortable sleep, left him to his repose. The instant he found himself alone, the stranger advanced to the window, and looked eagerly on the moor. A dense and black cloud was slowly rolling over the face of the moon; the stranger watched its heavy and tardy progress; it passed away, and Dian's crescent again shone forth. "I was right," he exclaimed, as his eye followed the fugitives—"I was right; but, by the mass, they shall not baffle me thus."

To resolve, with him, was to execute. He placed a rose noble on the table, stole softly from the chamber, saddled and brought out his steed, and spurred across the moor. The stranger was an excellent horseman, and his mettlesome steed, now rested and refreshed, bore him swiftly on, and he was rapidly gaining on the fugitives, of whom his view was unobscured. Not a tree, not a bush was in sight to assist escape or baffle pursuit. In an agony of fear, Maude urged on her palfrey, and, accompanied by Lord William, and

closely followed by Eppie and Bonnyblink, quickly gained a rising ground in the moors, dashed down on the other side, and hurried on. The stranger plied whip and spur, and he also gained the summit, where he reined up his steed, and gazed with mixed vexation and surprise on a wooded dell, in whose gloomy intricacies the fair object of his admiration had found shelter. Unwilling to believe that she had escaped him, he forced his courser down the descent, and rode to the verge of the wood, which he found traversed by many different paths; and, wholly at a loss which to choose, he laid the bridle on his horse's neck. "Take thine own way, Rayner, for, by the mass, I know not whether to turn to right or left."

Rayner quickly settled the matter, and the horse and his rider quickly disappeared in the recesses of the forest. Happily for the fugitives, a fortunate chance directed the course of their pursuer in an opposite direction to that which they travelled, and in safety the lovers reached the domain of Arnprior, when, after arranging how their future meetings were to be accomplished, the lovers parted, Lord William returning to the cave in the wood, which afforded him concealment and shelter, while Maude retraced her steps to the castle

of her proud and imperious father, into which she effected her entrance by a small window, which Eppie had previously unfastened ; but as all the art of this damsel to smuggle in the horses was unavailing, there was nothing to be done but turn them loose, and leave the consequences to chance.

On reaching her apartment, Maude found her cousin anxiously awaiting her return, and to whom she related her rencontre with the handsome stranger, his evident desire to penetrate her disguise, and his pursuit of Lord William and herself. “It is very hard, Maude,” said Lady Dorothea, “that all strange adventures fall to your lot, who care not for them ; while I, who am dying to be involved in some romantic exploit, am condemned to spend my life in tiresome sameness and security.”

“I wish,” replied Maude, “that I could view this adventure in the light you do ; but having such deep cause to dread the discovery of Lord William’s retreat, I am uneasy at having drawn on me the observation of one, who, if his looks do not belie him, will not be easily baffled. Short as was my interview with him, I saw at a glance that grace and elegance which marks its possessor as one who has mingled in courtly scenes, and I dread lest he may be one of the enemies of Douglas.”

“ We must endeavour to find out who the handsome vagrant is. James Erskine, perhaps, may be able to enlighten us on the subject. We shall scarcely apply to Lord William,—beshrew me if I think he would relish hearing your minute description of this gallant knight.”

“ Nay,” replied Maude, “ Lord William need fear comparison with no one; but a truce with your raillery, dear cousin, and let us to rest.”

“ Agreed,” replied Lady Dorothea; “ but take care you do not dream of the handsome stranger. Good-night.”

“ Dear me,” said Eppie, next morning, to one of the domestics, on hearing old Simon and Rory in loud dispute in the hall, “ what new hobbleshow is this that Simon’s raising?”

“ Troth, ” replied her companion, “ he’s going on at a dreadfu’ rate about the Lady Maude’s favourite palfrey being found this morning at the stable door covered wi’ glaur, and the shelty beside it, and he is raging on Rory, and says he will tell Sir John.”

This intelligence quickened Eppie’s steps to the scene of action.

“ This is past a’,” said the enraged Major Domo; “ Sir John maun ken o’ this.”

“What’s the matter, Maister Simon?” said Eppie; “ye seem to be in an unco curfuffle.”

“Is there ony wonder at that, when the Lady Maude’s horse has amaist been ridden to death?—as for the other brute, I’m no caring about it.”

“Na, the like o’ that!” said Eppie, with well-affected surprise; “it’s no canny.”

“I’m free to take my oath,” replied Rory, “that I locked the stable-door with my own hands, and brought you the key, Maister Simon.”

“And so ye did—I canna deny that; and the door was fast this morning; so how the horses got out is past my kenning.”

“I ken, though,” replied Eppie, confidently, while Rory stood aghast at her treachery.

“Will ye tell me, Maister Simon,” continued she, in a solemn tone, “will ye tell me whether or no ye had the wit to put a branch o’ the rowan-tree above the stable-door, to keep the witches frae the cattle?”

“No,” said Simon, in a rage; “I think a gude lock and key should keep them safer than a’ the rowan-trees in Scotland.”

“Ye havena just found that, my man,” retorted the damsel; “and if ye would take a friend’s advice, ye would gang this minute and pull a bunch o’ rowans.”

“Gang and pu’ a bunch of rowans! Na, na, my woman. I’ll gang this blessed moment and tell Sir John.”

“Just as ye like,” replied the damsel, with an air of indifference; “but ye ken as well as me that if once Sir John gets an inkling o’ the business, ye’ll may be no come aff as scaithless as ye expect. Ye ken he looks to you to see a’ things right. Did ye look to see if the horses were in the stable when Rory brought ye the key?”

“No, Mistress Eppie,” replied Simon, lowering his tone, “such a thing never came into my head.”

“Aweel,” replied Eppie, “every ane kens their ain business best; but if I was you I wouldna be fashing Sir John about the matter. I think he looks awfu’ dour the day—I wonder what has put him in such an ill mood.”

“I ken as little as ye do what ails him,” replied Simon; “but he was like to throttle me for speaking anent the feast that we are to make ready next week for the Earl of Mar, the Master o’ Mar, and gude kens how mony other knights and nobles. I just said to him we were in sair want o’ delicates, for that I could get naething frae the carriers, wha take everything past us on to Stirling to plenish the King’s board, when Sir John gied the

table a kick that sent it to the other side o' the chamber, cursed me for a drivelling knave, and bid me help myself in spite o' a' the kings in Christendom."

"Weel," said Eppie, "if Sir John is in that awfu' state, ye had better no meddle with him—but do as ye like, ye may be dinna mind him."

"Mind him!" retorted Simon, "faith he makes us a' mind him; so, for ance, my woman, I'll take your advice, though I jalouse ye hae your ain reasons for being sae keen to keep a calm sough."

"Reasons!" retorted the damsel, "I'm sure I hae nae reasons, but just having a kind o' liking for you. I would be wae to see you get into ony mischief with Sir John."

"Humph!" replied Simon; and after casting a very suspicious glance at Eppie and her accomplice, he strode out of the hall, leaving them to enjoy a hearty laugh at the expense of the puzzled Seneschal.

On the succeeding day the fair cousins encountered the Master of Mar riding towards Arnprior, and Lady Dorothea, impatient to have her curiosity gratified, scarcely allowed the common salutations to pass before she commenced her inquiries:—"Pray, good youth," she asked, "know you of

any noble, knight, or squire, who answers this description—A handsome form, manly, yet graceful, an oval face, blue eyes full of vivacity and mischief, an aquiline nose, and a mouth from which proceeds such honied sounds, as to captivate the heart through the ear?—Heigh-ho, I wonder who he can be,” she continued, affecting to sigh deeply.

“ ’Tis a pity,” replied the Master of Mar, in a tone of pique, “ that such a paragon should have left you in ignorance of his name and race.”

“ A pity !” retorted Lady Dorothea ; “ ’tis a crime which I cannot pardon. But as I have some little curiosity on the subject, I beg you will be so obliging as to endeavour to learn the name of this wandering knight.”

“ You must permit me to decline that honour,” replied he coldly ; “ you will please to find some other means to inform this gallant stranger of the interest he has been so fortunate as to excite ;”—and turning from her in anger, he rode close by Maude, who, vexed to see the fire of jealousy burning on his cheek, hastened to disperse his painful feelings.

“ Heed her not,” said Maude, kindly ; “ you know that she takes a pleasure in teasing those she loves best. She but jests with you ; and I pledge

my word, that she has seen no youth such as she describes ; and I will tell you the motive of her questions.”

As Maude related her meeting with the stranger, and the reasons which led them to wish to discover him, the Master’s countenance cleared ; and relieved from his jealous fears, he entered with friendly kindness into her feelings, and professed himself ready to devote himself to her service.

“ Ay,” said Lady Dorothea, “ that you shall, if you hope to keep my favour. Now, hear what is required of you. You are not to rest till you have found out the name of the youth who has occasioned you these jealous freaks ; then you are to intercede for Douglas with the King, and do not fail to be eloquent ; for I vow I shall wed with no one till the prospects of my dear cousin brighten.”

“ Did I lack a motive for serving this fair damsel,” replied he, “ you have given me one which will secure my best endeavours. The attempt to soften the King towards Douglas is not without danger ; but it shall be made. As to the other part of your order, I think I can satisfy you. I believe the youthful stranger is the Lord Lyle. He is at present absent from the court ; and as his

fondness for the chace is well known, I consider it more than probable that it was he who so alarmed our fair Maude. But I will instantly to Stirling, and try to ascertain how the King now stands affected towards Lord William ; and I trust I may bring your sweet cousin some comfort."

"Generous youth," said Maude, with glistening eyes, "how shall I thank you for your kindness?"

"Nay, never trouble yourself," replied Lady Dorothea. "Away with you, then, to Stirling, and see that you bring us back good tidings."

"I live but to obey you, fair tyrant," replied he; and bidding adieu to the fair cousins, the Master of Mar quickly departed on his embassy.

CHAPTER VII.

Fal. Now, Master Shallow, you'll complain of me to the king?

Shal. Knight, you have beaten my men, killed my deer, and broke open my lodge.

Merry Wives of Windsor.

AWARE that he would be supported by his master in the act which he meditated, Simon arranged his plan, and accompanied by three sturdy retainers, next day took his station on the road to Stirling, where he had not waited long when he descried a carrier driving three horses, loaded with well-stuffed paniers, up the hill.

“Gude day to ye, friend,” said Simon; “long looked for come at last. What hae ye got in your creels?” and as he spoke, he thrust his hand into one of the paniers.

“Cocks are free o’ horses’ corn,” replied the carrier, gruffly. “I hae naething to spare for you or yours; so take out your hand this moment.”

“Do ye think I’m gaun to steal, that you’re sae

dorty ?” replied Simon ; “ nae, nae, ye’ll get a reasonable price for your goods.”

“ Ance for a’,” answered the carrier, “ I tell ye I can gie ye nane o’ my load ; so let’s hae nae mair words about it.”

“ If we hae words, friend,” said Simon, coolly, “ that’s your fault and no mine ; but I let ye ken, that we maun hae provision, either by fair means or foul ; so ye may take your choice.”

“ Heard ever anybody the like o’ that ! Do ye mean to rob me ?”

“ Nae, nae ; tell truth, man, and shame the deil. I said I would pay ye for what I took. See that it’s no a paid skin ye get for your uncivil language.—Here, Rory and Duncan, come and haud the horse’s head.”

“ Ken ye wha I belang to ?” roared the carrier, attempting to drag the paniers from Simon’s clutches. “ Ken ye, I say, wha I belang to ?”

“ Feint a bit o’ me kens,” retorted Simon ; “ and as little do I care.”

“ I belang to the King ; and a’ that provender is gaun up to the Castle, for the use o’ his Grace.”

“ It’s weel to be him,” answered Simon, as he dived down among the ducks, turkeys, and capons.

“ Did ye hear me tell ye, ye auld shameless

reiver, that the delicates were for my master, the King o' Scotland?"

"It may be sae," answered Simon; "but if your master be King o' Scotland, mine is King o' Kippen; and now, my man, let's see what I should gie ye—Four capons, three hams——"

"Hae ye got a' that ye want?" hastily interrupted the carrier.

"I think sae," rejoined Simon.

"Then put up your siller, for this day's work will cost ye dear enough." And in high indignation the carrier pursued the road to the Castle, where the scantiness of his load caused great consternation to the clerk of the kitchen, Master Robin Powfowls, who, having trusted to a full supply of provisions from the carrier, found himself reduced to place a very meagre repast before the King and the nobles whom he had drawn around him, and who encouraged James to forget his late bondage in wassail and revelry.

"By the mass,"—said James, looking round,—
"by the mass, but our board is furnished too scantily;—our clerk of the kitchen forgets his duty. The varlet thinks, perhaps, that because we have not been out to-day with hawk and hound, that this is a fitting repast. We must dismiss the

careless knave, and appoint a better purveyor. But, gallants, we must e'en make the best of what is set before us—bad luck now, better another time.”

“ May it please your Grace,” said Lord Lyle, “ Master Robin Powfowls is not to blame in this matter, for I heard, scarce an hour since, that your Grace's carriers have been robbed on the road, and the provisions intended for your Grace's board have been taken from them by force.”

“ Now, by'r Lady,” said the King, “ this must be seen too—they must be bold rogues truly, to beard us at our very threshold. The villains shalt swing for it—By my faith, we will have to hang one half of our subjects for a warning to the other.”

“ It was no common knave, your Grace,” replied Lord Lyle, “ who was engaged in this exploit, but Sir John Buchanan of Arnprior, commonly called the King of Kippen; ay, and thinks himself as good a monarch as your Grace.”

“ By mine honour,” exclaimed James, “ but this is strange news. We thought not we had a brother king so near us. Know you aught, gallants, of this burly knight who makes so free with our property?”

“ Report,” answered Lord Lyle, “ speaks of

him as a bold and bluff knight, who cares little for either king or kaiser ;—certain it is, that he keeps strict rule within his bounds.”

“ Say you so ?” replied the King,—“ then, mayhap, we may go and take a lesson in the art of governing from this despotic sovereign. What say you, gallants ? shall we visit Arnprior, and help its master to discuss the viands he has purloined from us with so little ceremony ?”

“ I beseech your Grace,” said the Master of Kilmaurs, “ to let me be of your train when you visit Arnprior.”

“ Give us first thy reason, man,” said James, “ ere we grant the boon.”

“ Oh, I have none but a wish to see the knight.”

“ Nay, Kilmaurs,” answered Lyle, “ think you that we do not all know as well as thou, that Sir John has good broad lands, and a fair daughter to inherit them ?—Please your Grace, let Kilmaurs have no advantage over us.”

“ Who amongst you, gallants, has seen the damsel ?” asked the King.

“ I have, your Grace,” answered Lord Lyle, with animation.

“ Canst give us, then,” said James, “ a portraiture of this peerless beauty ?”

“ Can I ! ” said Lyle ; “ who that has once seen Maude Buchanan, can ever forget her ? But I lack eloquence to pourtray her charms, to describe her matchless form, her lovely countenance, her sunny ringlets.”

“ Beshrew me, my lord,” said James, “ your discourse savours of the folly of love. We knew not that so fair a gem lay hid so near us.”

“ How ! ” asked Kilmaurs ; “ has the Master of Mar never named Maude Buchanan to your Grace ? Why, he almost lives at Arnprior.”

“ No, by the mass,” replied the King, “ this is the first time I have heard speak of the damsel.”

“ Without doubt, he had his reasons,” replied Kilmaurs.

“ And if I had,” retorted the Master of Mar, with warmth, “ I am not bound to submit them to thee.”

“ How, man, James Erskine,” replied the King, “ may Kilmaurs not speak of a fair damsel, but thou must breathe defiance ? Hear me, my lords — The Lady Maude shall be the prize of him who loves her best. Who that may be, time will show — A health, gallants, — a health to the fair Maude, and let him who wins her wear her ; ” and in mirth and revelry so passed the night.

True to his promise, the Master of Mar boldly interceded for Lord William Douglas, but had the mortification to find James inflexible in his resentment. “By the mass, James Erskine,” said the King, his brow growing dark with passion, “it stirs my blood to find one hardy enough even to name any of the traitors. We marvel you have dared to tamper with our just anger. As you value our favour, let this attempt be your last.”

In deep displeasure the King turned away, and Erskine, grieved at his want of success, quickly left the palace, and returned to Alloa Tower, to reflect on what steps should next be pursued, and what means should be adopted to break his painful intelligence to the fair Maude.

CHAPTER VIII.

I'll gie thee jewels, an' I'll gie thee rings,
I'll gie thee pearls, an' many fine things,—
I'll gie thee silk petticoats fringed to the knee,
If thou'lt lea'e father and mother and marry wi' me.

Old Ballad.

IN the meanwhile, the fair Maude Buchanan sought not the admiration of king or courtier, but happy in the love of one noble heart, disdained all other homage, nor would she have exchanged an hour's sweet converse with Douglas in the greenwood shade, for a year passed in a royal palace. It was, however, her fate to attract the love of one who was but too well versed in the art of gaining the favour of the fair dames of Scotland; and whose winning spech, frank courtesy, and gallant bearing, forced even the coldest hearts to own his power to enchant and fascinate. Such was honest John Donaldson's stranger guest, who, struck

with sudden admiration of the beautiful and engaging Maude Buchanan, whose disguise he had penetrated, resolved to watch her steps, and to let no opportunity escape of pleading his love.

It was in the narrow valley of Strathblane, through which she was returning from Mugdock Castle, whither she had been sent by Sir John to bid its noble owners to the approaching feast, that Maude Buchanan again met her unknown lover. Startled at his sight, she hastily drew her blue silk hood over her face; in doing this, she dropt the bridle rein, which entangling in the feet of her palfrey, the spirited animal suddenly reared and plunged. The attendants of Maude spurred on to her relief; but before they could reach her, the handsome stranger sprung from his horse, seized with a strong hand the fractious steed, and, with gentle force, disengaged Maude, and placed her in safety on the ground.

Although Maude regretted the chance which had made her a debtor to the courtesy of the stranger, she proffered her thanks with a graceful modesty which riveted still more firmly her empire over his heart. "Spare me your thanks, fair lady," replied he; "it is I who owe a deep debt of gratitude to fortune, for guiding my steps into your

beauteous presence. I pray you, sweet damsel, undo this envious hood, and let the balmy summer-breeze stray among your clustering ringlets, and kiss the rose into your cheek, which, I fear me, alarm has banished."

"Nay," replied Maude, "I am not so very a coward. I was but a moment startled, and now that I see my palfrey has recovered his temper, I no longer fear to mount him again.—Simon, lead him hither."

Simon rode up, leading the now quiet steed.

"Let me have the honour of assisting you," said the stranger; and, suiting the action to the word, Maude found herself remounted ere she had time to assent or object to receive the services of her devoted squire. In some confusion, Maude, then averting her eyes from the stranger, said—

"Before we part, Sir Knight, permit me once more to tender you my thanks for your courtesy."

"Part!" replied he, with animation; "think you that I will allow you to traverse the country with no better guard than a few dastardly menials? I know my duty better. We part not till you are in safety. Nay, you will not surely deny me the boon I crave?—You cannot fear injury from

one who would with transport sacrifice his life in your defence? But, oh," he added in a lower tone, "how blest would he be, dared he to hope that he might spend his life in promoting the happiness of yours!"

Maude, finding the stranger determined not to leave her, acceded to his request with the best grace she could assume; and accompanied by him, and followed by her attendants, she pursued her way to Arnprior.

"Think not, fair lady," said he, with frank courtesy, "that in thus almost forcing my presence on you, I am actuated solely by a selfish desire of enjoying, even for a brief space, your coveted society. In truth, I like not the appearance of the weather, nor the aspect of these clouds which are lowering on the hills. Would that you were near some place of shelter!"

"Fear not for me, kind stranger," replied Maude; "I am no courtly dame, to shrink at a summer shower, or tremble at a breeze, but a rustic maiden, who has witnessed, ere now, the grandeur and sublimity of a mountain storm. But see, there is the sun bursting through the clouds—we shall have no storm to-day."

"Be not too confident, sweet maiden; fairer

skies than these have been shrouded by storms and tempests.—Down, Luath—still thy yelling, Fruth; their noise almost drowns thy soft speech. I pray your permission to place them under the care of your people—they can follow with them.”

The stranger turned his horse's head, and, riding hastily back to the attendants, gave the leash of the hounds into Simon's hand; and, after exchanging a few brief sentences with the old man, quickly resumed his place by the side of Maude, and taking the rein of her palfrey, led it gently along, catching from time to time a glance of Maude's glowing cheek, as the wind, now rising in sudden gusts, displaced the hood with which she endeavoured to shade her face from his enraptured gaze. Anxious to escape from his open admiration, Maude hurried on, and interrupted the strain of gallantry in which he addressed her by enlarging on the beauty of the scenery.

“If you are a stranger in this part of the country,” said Maude, “you will be delighted with the scenery we are approaching. This stream, the banks of which we now traverse, is the Blane, which rises in the highest of that range of hills; and a little way from this, we shall meet with that

beautiful cascade called the Spout of Ballaggan, with which I am sure you will be charmed."

"Frequently, very frequently, have I wandered with hawk and hound over the Lennox Hills, but never was I so charmed before," replied the stranger with animation.

Maude would not understand him, and affecting to take his speech literally, continued her discourse till they came within view of the cascade, which, precipitating itself from the height, falls, amidst rocks and stones, with a deafening sound, into a deep cavity hollowed out by the force of the ever-rushing waters.

"Is it not beautiful?" said Maude, turning to her companion.

"Fair Maude," replied the stranger, "ask me not to gaze on any beauty but that which now leads me a willing captive to your charms. Oh, tell me, may I hope to win an interest in your gentle heart?"

"Sir Knight," said Maude, while a flush of anger crossed her brow, "it is not fitting that Maude Buchanan should listen to such language from an unknown stranger;—your presumption offends me."

"Hear me, dearest Maude," replied her com-

panion, "and, before you condemn me, listen to the motives by which I have been actuated:—From the first moment in which I beheld you in the cottage, I loved you—passionately loved you. Judge then of my consternation, on hearing many of the nobles who surround our youthful monarch contending for your hand, and entreating the King to dispose of you in marriage without delay."

"What said the King?" asked Maude, in breathless terror.

"That he would bestow you on him that loved you best."

"Has he then some touch of compassion left? Are not then all generous feelings dead within him?"

"No, by Heavens! if you have heard so, believe me he has been most foully slandered. But why speak of him? Listen to me, dearest Maude: I enjoy the confidence of the King, by whose command I lay aside all external marks of rank and fortune, when absent on the missions with which he intrusts me; wealth far beyond what you can covet I will lay at your feet. Deign, then, beautiful Maude, to give me hope, that my ardent passion may move your gentle heart to love."

"Never," replied Maude, "never can I be

yours—Your passion has been hastily conceived, let it be as quickly effaced. Think me not harsh and ungrateful—it is surely the truest kindness to deal sincerely with you; and I would justly deserve to forfeit your esteem, did I delude you with false hopes.”

“Why do you so decidedly reject my suit, sweet Maude?” replied the knight. “Permit me at least to try to create an interest in your affections.”

“I pray you cease your entreaties,” replied Maude: “It cannot be. Return, then, return to the princely halls of Stirling, and forget me.”

“Ah, Maude!” exclaimed the knight, “what a bitter task you have assigned me! and in addition to this severe blow, other thoughts afflict me. James will see you—love you. I dread that he may gain your love, and be blessed with your smiles.”

“No, no, no!” exclaimed Maude with vehemence,—“I abhor, I detest him. Sooner than listen to his love, I would plunge into the abyss of dark waters at our feet. Name him not.”

“How!” rejoined the knight, with a gesture of surprise. “What has the King done to merit such deep displeasure?”

“It matters not,” replied Maude. “Do not urge this subject, I command you.”

“You shall be obeyed, beloved Maude; to every command but that of forgetting you, I shall yield a ready obedience. Will you forgive me if I ask if your heart is alike insensible to every one, or does it beat for another?”

A burning blush lived for a brief space on Maude’s cheek, then left it wan as clay, as she encountered the searching gaze of the knight, whose eye glanced fire as he exclaimed, “’Tis as I thought. The Master of Mar has gained your love; he shall buy it dear.”

“Sir Knight,” answered Maude, “you have ungenerously surprised my secret. Yes, I own that my heart is no longer mine; but the Master of Mar is not its possessor. I love one, from whom an adverse fate separates me. His state is, alas! past hope, past help.” And here a passionate burst of tears interrupted her speech.

“Forgive me, dearest Maude; these tears too keenly reproach me.—Heavenly powers! what sound is that?”

Deeply engrossed by their own feelings, Maude and the knight had not observed the indications of the storm till it burst over them with

sudden fury. The wind now raved in fitful blasts—the rain fell in torrents, and the increasing roar of the cascade became every moment more and more appalling.

“Look there—look there!” exclaimed Maude, pointing to the hill called the Earl’s Seat, and from which the Blane descends.

The knight gazed on the terrific scene. “It is the bursting of a water-spout—the stream swells fearfully. Fly, dear Maude, fly!”

“It is in vain; we are lost!” And she covered her eyes with her hands. Her fears seemed but too prophetic. The river, swoln by the torrent, suddenly burst its banks, carrying with it ruin and devastation; large trees torn up by the roots; gigantic masses of stones and rocks were hurried along, and thundering down the fall, gave added horror to the scene. Every passing moment increased the violence of the cascade; and the boiling flood, rapidly extending, bore havoc and destruction into the peaceful valley.

“Maude,” said the knight, in tremulous accents, “can you forgive me? It is I who, anxious to plead my love without interruption from your people, commanded them in your name to pursue a different route, but appointing a place to meet

them. By this mad folly I have deprived you of all succour, and you must perish. O, heavenly powers, save her, and let me be the only victim!"

"I forgive you," said Maude. "Nay, grieve not so deeply—I resign myself to my doom. But why should your life also be sacrificed? Your horse is fleet, and may outstrip the fast spreading deluge. Leave me, I implore you."

"No, by Heavens! We shall be saved together, or together perish. We are in extreme peril; but take courage, dear Maude, and with the blessing of Heaven, we may yet escape a dreadful death."

And as Maude thought of Douglas, his grief and despair should she meet such a doom as seemed too surely to await her if she yielded to despondency, her courage returned, and she resolved to make one desperate struggle to preserve a life which was so dear to him.

The knight grasped the rein of her palfrey, and burying his spurs in his horse's sides, the steeds sprung forward with the speed of light. But behind them came the rushing waters, tearing up everything which impeded its course, overwhelming alike the lowly cottage and the fertile fields, and lashing on in one wide sheet of foam, forced

itself a channel even in the road the travellers were traversing, and evidently was gaining on them. The deep-toned thunder, heard faintly at first amongst the hills, now approaching nearer and nearer, burst in loud peals above their heads. The wind raved around them, and the forked lightning, flashing in awful brightness, startled the affrighted steeds, which, amazed and bewildered by such fearful sights and sounds, became suddenly unmanageable, and when urged forward, reared and plunged, and with open nostrils, fire-flashing eyes, and bristling manes, impatiently tore up the ground.

The paleness of death overspread the countenance of Maude as she looked on the awful scene. Behind them raved the raging torrent, sweeping furiously over the low grounds, and whose boiling waves were fast chasing the fugitives, and gaining on their steps. On either hand precipitous rocks, untrodden by the foot of man, and accessible only to the ptarmigan or eagle, reared themselves up on high, and barred their passage. The knight also looked around, and gazed till cold drops bedewed his brow. He turned to Maude—"I have braved death ere now, and could now calmly meet it; but how shall I bear to see thee perish—thee whom I would die to save!"

“ My strength is exhausted,” replied Maude, in a faint voice. “ Here I will lay me down and die. Leave me to my fate. Fly, you may yet escape.”

“ Perish the thought !” replied the knight, with vehemence. “ Maude, dearest Maude, revive—look up—make one more effort, and we may yet be saved.”

The knight lifted Maude from her palfrey, and placed her before him ; then burying his spurs in the panting sides of his horse, the noble animal, as if conscious that the life of his master was at stake, exerted his utmost speed ; but when the cry of the drowning palfrey, now struggling with the waters, reached him, he staggered ; his eyes and nostrils were distended, and his trembling limbs appeared scarcely able to support him. The waves came nearer and nearer, mingling their wild uproar with the sound of the warring elements. The knight in despair again struck the bleeding sides of his horse, which reared violently ; then bounding forward, he outstripped the raging waters, cleared the ravine, and rushed on, till, on reaching a rising ground which gave them safety from the torrent, his master’s hand curbed his rapid speed.

The knight laid Maude on the smooth turf, and kneeling beside her, poured out a fervent thanks-

giving for their miraculous preservation. That sacred duty performed, he raised Maude in his arms, rested her drooping head on his breast, and by his tender cares soon recalled her to consciousness and life, when her burst of gratitude to her generous preserver deeply moved him, and he turned aside and dashed away a tear. But this was no time for the indulgence of emotion. Spent with fatigue and anxiety, dreary and long did the way appear to Maude, who hailed with joy the appearance of her people, who, ignorant of her danger, had waited patiently until she should rejoin them.

Maude's adieus to the stranger were made with faltering speech and glistening eyes. He kissed with devoted fondness her extended hand, and thus they parted.

CHAPTER IX.

“ The death-bell rung and wide were flung
The castle gates amain ;
While hurry out the armed rout,
And marshal on the plain.”

As Maude entered the domain of Arnprior, she was suddenly overtaken by Sir John, who was riding furiously towards the castle, accompanied by many of his followers, in the midst of whom rode a man bound and pinioned, and whose dark eyes flashed their lurid fire on the men whose naked weapons were pointed at his breast. In the countenance of the prisoner Maude discovered those features which so distinctly mark the gipsy race, and she turned aside from the glance of his bold and reckless eye.

“ How now, Maude ?” said Sir John ; “ what has chased the colour from your cheeks ? has a hare run across your path, or a raven croaked over head ?”

“ Not so, dear father,” said Maude, “ but I have been in peril, and——”

“ I shall hear thy story, Maude, when I have dispatched that dark villain to the other world.”

“ Alas, father, that is a dreadful doom ; perhaps he merits it not.”

“ Not merit it ! now, by’r Lady, if he had fifty lives, they are forfeited. The half of my cattle has been carried off by him and his confederates. They all escaped me but this villain. Nay, more, Arral and his followers, it is said, are lurking in the wood. They are probably lying in wait for an opportunity of revenging the chastisement I bestowed on their chief ; and I have no doubt that this wretch was engaged to assist their schemes.—Ruffian, robber, speak ! tell me ; were I in thy place, and thou in mine, what wouldst thou do ?”

The gipsy answered freely and fearlessly, “ I would lead thee to the greenwood glade, and make thee choose the tree on which I would hang thee.”

“ By the mass, thou speakest well and boldly ; it shall be as thou hast said ; and, by to-morrow’s dawn, your vile carcase shall be quivering in the blast. We defer our revenge, to make it taste the sweeter—lead him to the lowest dungeon, and, on your lives, guard him safely.—Now, Maude, fol-

low me." And Sir John, accompanied by his daughter, hastily entered the castle.

Sir John feared, and but too truly, that this would not be the last attempt of Arral. He was too much occupied in putting the castle in a state of defence, to bestow any attention on his daughter, whom he shortly dismissed to her chamber, where, in the warm interest and sympathy Dorothea showed at the relation of her late danger, she found consolation for the indifference and disregard of her father. Her faithful attendant Eppie cried and laughed alternately, at the narration of the peril and deliverance of her fair mistress; nor would she rest till Maude consented to change her apparel, after which she was ordered to withdraw, and the cousins were left alone.

Scarcely had an hour elapsed, when she again crept into the chamber, with a face pale as ashes. "What is the matter, Eppie?" said Maude, starting from the couch.

"Oh, my lady," answered she, holding out a ring as she spoke, "do ye ken whose ring this is?"

Maude snatched it from her. "This ring was Lord William's—where, in Heaven's name, did you obtain it?" asked Maude, deeply agitated.

“ I said it was his,” rejoined Eppie, “ and loath was I to bring it to you, for fear o’ your thinking that ony mischance had come ower him, but the man said he maun see you on a matter o’ life and death.”

“ What man? speak, I command you.”

“ Oh, dinna look sae feared, and I’ll tell you a’ about it; and the tale maun be a short one, for the night’s wearing away.—Ye maun ken, then, that Rory was set to guard the dungeon where the gipsy is shut up, who spoke through the door to Rory, and, by some jukery-pakery, he got Rory to open the door and take that ring, and made him promise to get it conveyed by me to your ladyship, with a message, that he had something to say to you, which would not bide delay, and that he maun hae instant speech o’ you—he said you would ken the token he sent.”

“ I will go this moment,” exclaimed Maude; “ Douglas may be in peril, and sends to us for aid.”

“ Ye canna gang just yet, my lady; for Sir John is rampaging through the castle at an awfu’ rate. Ye maun wait a wec till he settles, and I’ll go and watch till a’ is quiet, and then come back for you. Rory is aye guarding the door yet, and

has promised to let us in to the prisoner.”—And away went Eppie.

In an agony of impatience, Maude counted the lagging hours. In vain did her cousin exert herself to cheer and reassure her. Images of horror filled her mind—her imagination painted to her every possible calamity to which her lover was exposed, and so vividly, that by the time Eppie came to conduct her to the prisoner, she could with difficulty drag herself along.

On arriving at the dungeon, Rory softly unfastened the massive door, motioned them to enter, and then resumed his station without. The light which Eppie carried fell on the ferocious countenance of the gipsy; and when Maude recollected that it was her stern father who had doomed him to die a shameful death, a suspicion crossed her mind that she was lured there to be sacrificed to his revenge, and she involuntarily shrunk back; but anxiety to learn tidings of Lord William arrested her steps, and she faltered out, “Where is he who gave you that token? Is he in peril? Does he lack aid or succour? Speak thy message, be it for good or evil.”

“The owner of this ring,” replied the gipsy, “once stood my friend when my life was menaced.

In his fallen state I have had an opportunity of showing him the gratitude I feel. I discovered to him a cave, where he and his follower might conceal themselves during the day, and I kept his retreat a secret even from my own people. The noble youth bestowed on me this jewel, and I used it to draw you hither. Lady, you must grant me a boon."

"Grateful as I feel for the succour you have afforded one who is so dear to me," replied Maude, "it grieves me that I am powerless to assist you. Exasperated as my father is at your participation in Arral's schemes of revenge, intercession would be worse than useless."

"I swear," replied the gipsy, "that I am not leagued with Arral. We have lurked in the woods of Arnprior, to conceal ourselves from those whom King James has empowered to seize and deliver us to the Lord of Little Egypt. Scruple not, therefore, to grant my boon."

"Alas!" said Maude, "every passage is guarded. Escape is impossible—human help cannot save you."

"Hope of escape," replied the prisoner, "I have none. All that I ask is, that you will get this writing deposited in the hollow of the ancient oak

tree at the entrance of the wood. Let this be done speedily, and I am your slave—neglect it, and——”

The prisoner paused, but his threatening looks were sufficiently intelligible.

“Oh, my lady,” said Eppie, “take the writing, and let us awa’ out o’ this grewsome hole; for Simon is to be here soon to take Rory’s place at the door, and there would be an unco stramash if we were found here. I’ll make Rory do this man’s bidding. Oh, come awa’: you’re shakin’ like an aspin leaf.”

“Unhappy man,” said Maude, “and must you die? No, no—I will kneel to my father, and beg your life.”

“Lady,” answered the prisoner, “it is in vain that you would generously intercede for me. Sir John thirsts for my blood, and that alone will appease his wrath. I know my doom—seek not to move his pity. I would not accept of life from his hands.”

“Aweel,” said Eppie, “this beats a’. I wonder you’re sae keen to be strapped up in a tow. But, gude guide us, I’m thinking I hear Simon coming. Let us out, Rory man, if you would keep your head on your shouthers. What would

Sir John say if he found us consorting with this dour carle, whose face is as yellow as a kite's claw? Oh, haste ye, my lady!" And Maude and her attendant having hastily left the dungeon, the door was again closed on the prisoner.

At the earliest dawn of the succeeding day, and while the dew still glittered on leaf and flower, the Castle of Arnprior resounded with the din of preparation, and shortly after, Sir John issued from the gate, followed by a small number of attendants, fully armed, amongst whom rode the gipsy, who, although journeying to meet his death, preserved an air of indomitable courage, and his eye quailed not, even when they reached the verge of the fatal wood.

"Vile wretch, robber, thief," shouted Sir John, "the time is come when thou shalt receive meet punishment for thy deeds of blood and rapine! Choose, then, on which of these trees thy carcass shall be suspended. By the mass, the carrion-crows shall soon have a feast! Here is a sturdy oak that may serve the turn."

"Not so," said the gipsy; "you promised me my choice, and my choice I will have."

"Have it then, in the fiend's name," retorted Sir John; "but be speedy, for I long to rid the earth of such a bold villain as thou art."

The gipsy spoke not, but casting a wrathful glance on the knight, rode deeper into the wood, examining the trees with scrutinizing looks, and muttering to himself, "The ash—no, no. Too often have I sat beneath its shade with her that I shall see no more. Neither shall the dark fir of this detested country bear my corpse. Shall the beech, then——"

"By the mass," exclaimed Sir John, "I lack patience for this foolery. Bring hither the rope."

"I am ready," shouted the gipsy, as a band of his confederates burst from their ambush, and surrounding Sir John and his attendants, commenced a furious attack, while the gipsy nearest the prisoner hastily cut the cords by which he was bound. No sooner did he find himself at liberty, than snatching a weapon, he threw himself on the knight, and assaulted him with fury, while the dark fire of revenge burned in his cheek and eye. The suddenness of this rencontre deprived Sir John for an instant of his self-possession; but, quickly rallying, he showered his blows on his antagonist with such good-will, that the blood streamed from several deep wounds, and there seemed every chance of the sword doing the duty assigned to the rope, when the gipsy, by a dexte-

rous movement, at once parried a fierce blow, and pierced with his long knife the sword arm of the knight, whose weapon dropped from his powerless hand, and his antagonist was about to repeat the stroke, when Sir John's attendants, hurrying to the rescue, rushed between the combatants, and while some of them engaged the assailants, the others, seizing the bridle of his horse, fled hastily through the wood, to the verge of which they were hotly pursued by the infuriated band, but who not daring to venture into the open plain, here stopped the chase, and dived again into the recesses of the wood.

The termination of this exploit deeply wounded the pride of Sir John, who, chafed and irritated, returned to Arnprior in such a savage temper of mind, that his menials dared scarcely enter his presence; and he repulsed Maude's tender cares with a harshness which cut her to the heart, and sent her to her chamber to give vent to her fast gathering tears.

Fully aware now of the lawless band which lurked near the castle, Sir John redoubled his precautions, and enforced some regulations which did not by any means meet the approbation of Eppie.

“Oh, my lady,” said that faithful abigail, bouncing into Maude’s apartment the day after the affray, “hae ye heard the dreadfu’ news?”

“What news?” exclaimed Maude. “Is my father worse—Does not his wound heal?”

“Wound!” retorted Eppie, in high disdain. “I doubt there’s little the matter with him. He is ranging through the whole castle, stopping up every hole and bore; and I hear tell that we are no to be allowed to gang beyond the castle walls. It’s a black burning shame to think that we are a’ to be shut up like sae mony mice in a trap, because he’s got a bit slash frae a tinkler’s knife.”

“Hush, Eppie,” replied Maude; “you must speak of my father with more respect.”

“Ye maunna be angry with me,” rejoined the damsel; “for I’m just driven delectit with thinking how we are to get word o’ this to Lord William. There’s naebody in the castle ye would like to trust to gang to the cave, and nae doubt but he and Bonnyblink will wonder sair what has come ower us.”

“This is indeed sad news,” said Maude. “Some means must be found to apprise Lord William of this unforeseen obstacle to our meetings.”

“Make yourself easy, cousin,” replied Lady

Dorothea ; “ you have an auxiliary in this nimble-witted damsel, who, without doubt, will find a way to obviate every difficulty.”

“ If I had *young* men to deal with,” answered Eppie, “ I might come some speed ; but that auld dour sorra, Simon Brodie, maist waur me a’the-gither.—Gude preserve us, if there’s no Sir John crying for your ladyship ; he’s like to ding down the castle walls with his din. For ony sake, gang to him.” And Maude, somewhat startled, hastily obeyed Sir John’s loud summons.

“ Hark ye, Maude,” said the knight ; “ thou knowest that the day of the feast is fast approaching. See that you bring a more cheerful countenance to the board. I like not that cloudy brow.”

“ ’Tis an arduous task, father,” replied Maude, gently, “ to wear a smiling aspect when the heart is ill at ease.”

“ Dost bandy words with me, wench ?” said Sir John, angrily. “ I tell thee that looks, words, ay, and actions too, shall be fashioned to my liking. Go and prepare your best array, and dress your face with smiles, for the Master of Mar is soon to be my guest. The Earl of Mar has asked thy hand for his son, and I have given my consent.”

“ There is yet one thing he lacketh,” replied Maude, with spirit.

“And what is that, minion?” asked the knight.

“*My* consent, father, which I vow he shall never have.”

“How! this to me? Wilt thou dare to dispute my will? Why dost thou scorn James Erskine’s hand?”

“Because I love another. Oh, my dear father, can you think the noble Douglas is so soon forgot? Have patience, I implore you. The displeasure of the King may pass away, and all will again be well.”

“Put that folly from your mind, Maude. The house of Douglas has fallen, never to rise again; and, by the mass, you shall never wed with one of a ruined race.”

“Then, never will I be a bride,” said Maude, firmly.

“You shall wed with James Erskine. I swear this, by all the saints. Means shall be found to tame thy proud spirit. You pass not these walls but as the wife of the Master of Mar.—Silence, I command thee! Didst thou speak till doomsday, thou wouldst not turn me from my purpose. To your chamber, wench—to your chamber, and stir not from it till you know your duty better.”

In silence Maude withdrew to her chamber,

from the window of which she soon after saw Sir John stride into the court, throw himself on his horse, and, followed by a number of his retainers, ride quickly from the castle gate.

CHAPTER X.

Mar.—But where delays she still? O golden time
 Of travel, when each rising sun united,
 And nought but latest night divided us!
 Then ran no sand—then knell'd no hour for us!
 It seem'd as if excess of happiness
 Had made th' eternal wheels of Time stand still!
 Yes, he hath fall'n from out his heaven of bliss,
 That can descend to think of changing hours:
 No clock strikes for the happy.

SCHILLER.

Rod.—What, ho! Brabantio! Signor Brabantio, ho!

Iago.—Awake! what, ho! Brabantio! thieves! thieves! thieves!
 Look to your house, your daughter, and your bags!
 Thieves! thieves!

Othello.

“WHAT has vexed you, Maude?” said Lady Dorothea, as her cousin entered her chamber.—“You look disturbed, has anything happened to distress you?”

“Yes,” replied Maude, “I have just left my father, who has commanded me to prepare to receive one to whom he has promised my hand.”

“And pray, who may this favoured mortal be?” Maude hesitated. “Is this a secret, fair cousin?” said Lady Dorothea.

“No,” replied Maude, “and yet I know not how to tell you that he has bid me look on the Master of Mar as my future husband.”

“The Master of Mar!” exclaimed Lady Dorothea, while the colour mounted to her cheek. “Has he been so base as to sue for your hand?”

“Nay, cousin, be not thus concerned.”

“Concerned, good sooth! would it not move any woman, who has a spark of feeling, to learn that one whom she has esteemed a true knight, should prove a base deceiver?”

“You blame him most unjustly,” replied Maude. “James Erskine is guiltless of falsehood and deceit. I am certain that this matter has been arranged by the Earl and my father without the knowledge of the Master of Mar. You are too rash, Dorothea—you ought not to condemn, unheard, one who has given you so many proofs of the most devoted affection.”

“You are right, Maude. James Erskine deserves my fullest confidence, and I will wait patiently till I hear from him the explanation of this sad affair.”

“I feel certain that no blame attaches to him;

but, dearest cousin, my heart sinks when I think of the stern character of my father; he cannot brook opposition to his will—how shall I support his threats and reproaches?”

“Do not despond, Maude; we may yet find a way to avert the evils which threaten us. Would to Heaven that the Master of Mar were here to advise us what steps to pursue!”

In vain did Dorothea strive to raise Maude’s drooping spirits; a presentiment of evil oppressed her mind, and her clouded imagination painted the future in the darkest colours.

“Dear me,” said Eppie, breaking in upon their conference,” but this day has been like a year,—sae dull and drumly, it’s enough to gie a body the mirlegoes. I’ve been fighting and flyting with auld Simon just to keep me frae wearying. The lock-ing o’ the gates has driven me doited, and I’m feared, if we dinna soon manage to let Lord William ken whatfor we canna meet him in the glen, I’m thinking if we dinna gang to him, he’ll come to us.”

“Don’t speak of such a thing, Eppie,” replied Maude; “surely he will never be so rash.”

“Deed,” replied the damsel, “there’s nae saying what a man in love will do; gay daftlike things,

if a' tales be true; but I'll gang and try to fleech that auld carl to let me out for half an hour. I could easily rin up the glen, and back again, in that time;" and away went Eppie to the hall, where she found Simon and several other domestics variously employed.

"What makes ye sae restless, Mistress Eppie?" said Rory; "ye hae been out and in twenty times within this ten minutes."

"Just because I canna keep awa frae you and Simon," she replied with a roguish smile.

"Dinna lippen to her, Rory," said Simon; "she's a perfect wolf in sheep's clothing. I'll wager a rose noble to a bodle that she's ettling at something or other; but I'm up to her cantrips now—she canna cheat me," continued he, with great self-sufficiency.

"You're no worth the cheating, man," replied the damsel, tossing her head; "there would be little to brag o', to make an auld haverel like you believe that black was white; but gude be thankit, I want naething but what is reasonable, and that's just to gang ower the moor to see my father and mither. I had an awfu' dream about them last night, and I canna get no rest till I ken that they are weel. I dreamed, Master Simon, that I saw

my father gang whistling ower the moor with his gun in his hand, and the dog running at his foot; but he hadna gane a hundred steps when he plashed up to his neck in the middle o' a slough that he hadna noticed; and my mither hearing the dog youffing, and him roaring for help, ran out to him; but in trying to get him out—I grew yet to think o' it, for I saw it as plain as a pike-staff, Master Simon—she fell in on the top o' him. I gied an awfu' skreigh and waukened in a fright; and ye see I canna rest, night or day, till I ken they are in life; so you'll just open the gate and let me out to see them. I'll no stay a minute."

"Aweel, Mistress Eppie," replied Simon, coolly, "I hae nae objections to let you out; but deil be in my fingers if I let you in again. This is Sir John's orders, and I'm thinking he'll be weel quit o' ye; for I jalouse ye egg up the Lady Maude to sneeze at her father's commands. A' parents arena blessed with such gude bairns as ye are, Eppie," continued Simon, with a grin; "so gang your ways hame, and see if they be to the fore yet, for, if your dream be true, they're in gay cauld quarters."

"If I am no to be let in again, I'll gang on nae such errand," retorted the damsel; "as they baith fell in, they may help ane another out. Na, na; I

canna leave the Lady Maude, poor lamb, among such dour carles as Sir John and the like o' him."

"Hout, fye, Eppie," said Simon, jeeringly, "it's very ill done in you to leave your father and mother up to the neck in a bog; gang awa, my woman, and fleech them, if ye like, for ye canna fleech Simon Brodie."

"And who but you obliges me to fleech?" retorted Eppie; "do ye no think we would take the strong hand if we could?"

"Deed," said another damsel, "I dinna like this new fashion o' keeping the gates shut like grim death; a body might just as weel be in a prison."

"Crack awa, lasses," replied Simon; "we maun let them speak, poor things,—it's a' they can do;" and Eppie, in despair, retired to her little dormitory to invent some plan to let Lord William know of their state of thralldom. She sat herself down at the grated window, but in the next moment started up in joyful surprise, as she recognised the voice of Bonnyblink softly calling on her name.

"Gude preserve us a', Bonnyblink, is that you? You're a bold man to venture yourself here."

"I must have speech of Lady Maude," replied he; "Lord William has heard that Sir John has

betrothed her to the Master of Mar, and he's like to gang out o' his judgment. I had to gang doun on my bended knees to hinder him frae coming here himsell;—but let me see the Lady Maude, for I swore to bring him word from her ain mouth how it stands with her.”

“Deed,” said Eppie, “that's easier said than done. But stop a wee; I think this will do,” she continued, poking through the small window her tartan cloak, a gown, petticoat, and bonnet, in which he quickly attired himself. “Now, lad,” said she, “mind that ye are a lassie wanting some wine for a sick mither; step round and knock boldly at the yett, and I'll run to the hall;” into which she entered with a slow step and demure look, and seating herself near Simon, began busily to knit her stocking.

“I think I hear an unco rapping at the yett,” said Rory.

“A rapping at the yett?” rejoined Eppie; “wha can it be at this time o' night? Dinna ye rise, Simon; I'll gang mysell, and see what they want.” Eppie left the hall, and quickly returning, said, “There's a bit lassie at the yett asking for a drap o' wine for a sick body, who is na expected to live.”

“I winna open the yett for sick body or hale,” said Simon, peevishly.

“ Did ever mortal hear the like o’ that ?” replied Eppie. “ Did ye no hear me tell ye it was for a woman at death’s door ?”

“ Aweel,” retorted Simon, “ if she has got that length, wine winna do her ony good.”

“ Troth, Simon,” said Eppie, “ this is no like you; take pity on the poor lassie, and just open the yett; I’ll gie ye nae mair trouble, for I’ll take her up to my room, and get what she wants frae Lady Maude.”

“ Haud that lang tongue o’ yours, Eppie,” replied Simon, “ for I’m wearied with your din, and dinna be blawing in my lug, for the yett shall not be opened this blessed night, if a’ the auld wives in the parish were in the dead-thraw.”

“ Hech, sirs,” retorted the abigail, “ it’s an awfu’ thing to hear ye speak that gate; it’s hard to say how soon the youngest and strongest o’ us a’ may be brought to death’s-door, far less them that hae three score o’ years upon their head.”

“ It’s nane o’ your business whether I hae three score or six score on my head—ye mislear’t tinkler.”

“ Aweel, Simon Brodie,” replied the damsel, “ see if ye dinna repent o’ this night’s wark. Ye ken as weel as I do, that it would anger the

Lady Maude sair, to hear that ony poor bodie had been sae ill guided ; and I'm thinking that she and Sir John will soon be as couthy as ever together, for she has a notion now o' the Master o' Mar ; and when she has the upper hand, see if ye dinna get your paiks for this."

" I daresay ye are telling a when lees, lassie," said Simon, rising slowly ; " but I'll e'en gang and see the woman mysell ;" but his motions were accelerated on hearing a trampling of horses' feet, and the loud voice of Sir John demanding admittance.

In dismay, Eppie run to her little room ; but her fears were allayed on finding Bonnyblink safe under her window, he having fled round to that side of the castle, on hearing the approach of the knight ; and Eppie, alarmed at their recent danger, after promising that Lady Maude would visit the glen on the ensuing night, hurried him away.

" What can be done, Dorothea?" said Maude, after listening to Eppie's account of her brief conversation with Bonnyblink. " I am in agonies lest Douglas's jealous fears of the Master of Mar should drive him to take some desperate step ; and if he learns James Erskine's visit here before

I can see him, and assure him of my fidelity to my vows, I know not what may be the consequence."

"Keep up your heart, my dear young lady," said Eppie, "for if we tine hope we tine a'. The Lady Dorothea will maybe help us yet to cheat Sir John."

"Dearest Maude," replied her lively cousin, "what could tempt you to undertake to act the heroine? By that varying cheek I vow you lack the qualifications necessary for such a part."

"No, cousin," replied Maude, with spirit; "I lack not patience to endure suffering, fortitude to bear trials, or courage to pursue that path my heart and conscience approve. But I confess I lack invention; I am a novice in deceit, and my mind revolts at dissimulation and falsehood."

"It is well spoken, Maude; but, nevertheless, as there is a necessity for your seeing Lord William, you must stoop to a little harmless deceit."

"Harmless deceit!" rejoined Maude; "what a perversion of words. Yet such is the urgency of the case, I yield to it, even against my better judgment."

"Well, then," said Dorothea, "hear my plan. I shall to-morrow take a high tone with Sir John,

remonstrate on the hardship of being shut up like a prisoner, and flatly tell him that I will either have free egress and ingress to the castle, or leave it; and as he is anxious that the approaching feast should be enlivened by my delightful presence, I am sure he will give his consent; and this obtained, you shall muffle yourself up in my attire, and sally forth at evening to the glen, while I shall occupy your chamber and couch, and be too ill to admit any one."

This plan was adopted; and, in pursuance of it, Lady Dorothea, next morning, remonstrated so firmly with the knight, that he was forced to yield the point; and orders were given to Simon to permit her to pass and repass the castle gates at her will and pleasure. Long and tedious did the day appear to Maude, who anxiously counted the slowly passing hours.

"Nay, look not so sad, dear cousin," said Dorothea, as she drew Maude to the window of her chamber; "see, the sun is sinking rapidly in the west: I doubt not that Lord William thinks he lags too long like your fair self."

"I have no heart for this enterprise," replied Maude; "I feel an unspeakable reluctance to visit the glen to-night."

“Go to, silly thing—put away these gloomy fancies—what do you fear?”

“In sooth, I know not; but my mind misgives me sadly. Perhaps it is a consciousness of deceit which oppresses me.”

“Your conscience, my dear cousin, is far too tender for one in love. That wayward passion too often leads us from the narrow path of integrity. But a truce to moralizing—here is my hood and mantle—nay, carry yourself more jauntily, I pray; that pensive step does not belong to me.”

“I’ll rin before,” said Eppie, “and make Simon open the yett, so that ye needna speak to him;”—and Maude, preceded by Eppie, passed quickly on to the court of the castle.

“Here, Simon,” cried Eppie, “come and let out the Lady Dorothea, she wants to get a gliff o’ the caller air; it’s weel with her no to be keepit aye between stane and lime. I’m clean dazed mysell with this locking-in fashion—ay, that will do—ye needna stand there waiting till she gangs past; but ye maun come this very minute and gie me some sack for a posset for Lady Maude; poor thing, she has taken an unco chittering and shaking, and I hae persuaded her to lie down for a wee; come awa’, man, do ye hear me speaking to ye?”

“Brawly, Mistress Eppie; but ye maun just wait a wee.”

“I’ll no wait anither minute; but if ye dinna like to gang, just gie me the key o’ the buttery, and I’ll help mysell.”

“I dinna misdoubt ye,” retorted Simon, with a grin.

“I’ll tell you what, Simon Brodie—if ye dinna come this precious minute, and gie me what my lady wants, I’ll complain to Sir John—and ye ken weel that he will let naebody thwart her but himsell; and if she disna get the posset, and is no able to be at the feast the morn, I wouldna be in your skin for a ladlefu’ o’ gold—are ye coming or no?” And Simon, finding it no longer safe to contest the point, proceeded to the buttery, followed by Eppie, while Maude passed out of the castle gates, and, with hurried and faltering steps, took her way up the glen.

In the meanwhile Dorothea, in the character of Maude, kept close in her chamber; and Eppie, by way of passing the time, tormented Simon, by interrupting him in his busiest moments, by feigning innumerable messages from Maude for all sorts of condiments.

“The sorra’s in your lady,” said Simon, in a

rage; “if she gangs on at this rate, we’ll be scant o’ comfited things for the feast the morn; she didna use to be sae fashious.”

“Oh, but ye see, Simon, sick folks——”

“Sick folks!” retorted Simon; “she has eaten more this night than she has done for a week past. It’s no natural; gang ye and get her away to her bed; a sound sleep will do her muckle gude—it’s an awfu’-like thing to hear her crying for eapon and moorcock at this time o’ night—Haud out o’ my gate, I tell ye;”—and Simon hurried to the buttery, while Eppie returned to divert the solitude of Lady Dorothea with an account of her projects to annoy him, and keep him from observing the prolonged absence of the pretended Lady Dorothea. But when hour after hour passed away, and still Maude came not, Lady Dorothea became alarmed.

“It is very late,” said Lady Dorothea; “I wish my dear cousin were safe home again.”

“Deed,” replied Eppie, “I begin to take a thought about her mysell; it’s no like her to taigle sae lang; but, nae doubt, lovers hae aye sae muckle to say to ane anither, that they dinna notice how the time slips by—But whisht—is that a din at the yett? No, no; it’s Sir John snoring; he’s

gane soon to his bed, as he is to be up by skreigh o' day, to get a' in order for the feast."

"Look out, Eppie, and see if she is not coming down the glen."

"There is no appearance o' her," replied the damsel; "and I'm feared that, if she disna come soon, Simon will be away to his bed, and the stramash o' getting him up may waken Sir John. I can thole this no longer. I'll be out o' this window, as sure as my name is Eppie Donaldson."

"Impossible," replied Lady Dorothea; "you have forgot how far it is from the ground."

"I'll try it, however," said the damsel; and snatching the sheets from Maude's bed, she fastened them to the window, dexterously slid down, and reached the ground in safety. Assisted by the light of a clear moon, she quickly gained the path leading to the glen, where she found Bonnyblink stationed.

"Where is the Lady Maude?" cried she, as he hastened to meet her; "it's no discreet in Lord William to taigle her so long—Do ye ken what time o' night it is, Maister Bonnyblink?"

At this moment Lord William appeared.—"Where is your lady?" asked he, hastily. "*Can* she not, or *will* she not meet me?"

“Where is my lady?” said Eppie, “Is she no here? She left the castle in the gloaming; I watched her mysell frae the window.”

“Heaven and earth! sayest thou that the Lady Maude left the castle to meet me?”

“I’ll swear to it,” cried Eppie, wringing her hands; “and what has become o’ her, gude only kens!”

“My lord,” said Bonnyblink, “I fear Lady Maude has been carried off by Arral’s clan; I saw several of them lurking about Arnprior no later than last night.”

“Villain!” exclaimed Lord William, “why did you not tell me this? Think you that I would have periled Lady Maude’s safety by entreating her to come here?”

“Oh, my lord,” cried Eppie, “dinna be staying to flyte on poor Bonnyblink, but let us gang back and search every foot of the road she came.”

This suggestion was instantly acted upon, and at the entrance to the glen they discovered the turf torn up, as if trampled by a large body of horsemen. “I shall yet trace the villains,” exclaimed Douglas, as he grasped his dirk.

“Gude preserve us a’,” said Eppie, “are ye de-leerit to think o’ fleeing through the country?—it

will be broad day-light in nae time.—For ony sake gang back to your cave and hide yoursell, for if ye were taken and had your head chapped off, I'm certain sure the Lady Maude would die o' grief."

"This disguise," answered Lord William, "will enable me to traverse the country in safety; but even were it not so, think you that I would remain in cowardly security, while Maude is in peril? Hie thee to Arnprior, arouse Sir John, and bid him hasten to the rescue."

"Oh!" exclaimed the weeping damsel, "how am I to face Sir John? I weel deserve his anger for carryin' on such hiddling work—dear is the day for my poor lady, who I'm wae to think o'. And are ye gaeing off too, Bonnyblink?"

"Dinna greet, Eppie," replied he; "ye ken I canna desert my master in his utmost need; keep a gude heart, and nae fear but we'll soon bring the Lady Maude back again." And in another moment Eppie found herself alone in the silent glen.

Blinded with tears, she hastily retraced her steps; and losing all fear of punishment in her anxiety to procure help for her young mistress, she knocked loudly at the gate, crying—"Rise, Simon, rise, ye auld sorra, and let me in; I say, get out o' your bed, ye lazy loon; weel does it become you to be sleeping and snoring there, when

the Lady Maude is in peril. Rise, I say, ye auld, deaf, doited haverel !”

Simon, thus suddenly awakened from a profound slumber, hastily arose, and opening a small turret window, angrily demanded—“ Who is there? and what’s a’ this din about ?”

“ What’s a’ this din about ?” retorted Eppie; “ rise and ye’ll see; open the yett this minute, on life and death.”

“ And who are ye that crack sae crouse ?” retorted Simon.

“ Who am I, truly? Your cowl maun be drawn weel ower your lang lugs, if ye dinna ken it’s Eppie Donaldson that’s speaking to ye.”

“ Ye needna expect to cheat me,” said Simon, coolly; “ think ye I will believe that a decent lassie like Eppie Donaldson would be scouring the country at this time o’ night? Gang about your business, ye randy tinkler; like enough ye belang to some o’ the ne’er-do-weel gipsies that are harbouring about. Ye hae nae doubt heard o’ the feast the morn.”

“ Speak na o’ feasts, ye doited gomeril; there will be little but wailing in the castle the morn.”

“ Nae doubt it would be sae, if you and your band had your will; but, my woman, we hae ye out, and we’ll keep ye out.”

“Simon Brodie,” exclaimed Eppie, in despair, “I tell you the Lady Maude has been carried awa’ by wild reivers, and if ye dinna waken Sir John, and send him after them, I’ll strangle ye with my ain hands.”

“By my faith,” said Simon, giving a hoarse laugh, “but this beats a’; see, my woman, and contrive a better lee the next time ye want to get to a weel-filled buttery. The Lady Maude hasna been out o’ her chamber the day, and maun be sound sleeping by this time,—at least if she drank a’ the sack posset I sent her; and how would Eppie get out, think ye, when I hae the key o’ the castle yetts below my head?”

“Do ye want to drive me deleerit, ye auld deevil?” retorted Eppie; “I tell you it was the Lady Maude that gaed out in Lady Dorothea’s mantle and hood, and I slipped down frae a window after her.”

“Gude guide us a’, if this should be true, Mistress Eppie, ye hae slipped your neck into a noose that will haud ye fast enough; ye’ll no find it easy to deal with Sir John anent this matter.”

“I carena what becomes o’ me, so that there’s help got for Lady Maude. Open the yett, then, Simon, and dinna bring Sir John’s anger on you for keeping me frae telling him the waefu’ news.”

“Faith, there’s reason in that,” replied Simon; and hurrying on his clothes, he quickly descended, and admitted the weeping damsel, on whom he showered a torrent of invective.—“And how are ye to face Sir John, ye leeing sorra? do ye no hear him swearing and crying to ken what this din is about? If he would take my advice, he would make ye shorter by the head.”

“How now, varlets!” shouted the knight; “art drunk or frantic, that there is such an uproar? Come hither, Simon.” The old man obeyed—“What means this din?” asked Sir John; “and who knocked so boldly at the gate?”

“It was Eppie, Sir John,” replied Simon, in a tremulous voice.

“How! what does my daughter’s menial out of the castle at this time of night? By my fey, she shall be scourged for it by the dawn. Get you gone, knave, and if you value your head, look better to watch and ward.”

“May it please you, Sir John,” responded Simon, “to let the damsel hae speech o’ you: she says something o’ the Lady Maude having been carried away in the night.”

“You dream, old dotard! But I’ll see the wench myself,” said Sir John, striding into the hall—

“What means all this disturbance?” asked the knight, looking sternly at Eppie.

“Oh, uncle,” said Lady Dorothea, “be not so severe. Speak, Eppie, what has happened? Oh, my dearest Maude, if any ill has befallen thee, I’ll never know happiness again!”

“You here, Dorothea?” replied the knight; “truly, my household seem to have lost their wits. But speak, minion, what sayest thou of my daughter—where is Maude?”

“Oh, that I could tell!” replied Eppie; “but she has been carried awa’ this night.”

“You lie,” cried Sir John, fiercely. “What! dost think to make me believe that any one could take Maude out of the castle without being heard? If you value your life, tell the truth, or, by the mass, I will make short work with you.”

“She wasna just taken out o’ the castle,” sobbed Eppie; “for I persuaded her to gang down the glen.”

“For what purpose?”

“Just to meet, for twa or three minutes, with—”

“With whom?” said Sir John, in a voice of thunder.

“With Lord William,”—and here Eppie dropped on her knees, and her sobs redoubled.

“Vile wretch!” exclaimed the knight, as he spurned her with his foot; “out of my sight, ere I trample thee to death! Rouse the men!—To horse—to horse!”—Then snatching up his sword, and placing his pistols in his belt, he rushed into the court, where his people being quickly assembled and mounted, the party rode furiously from the castle gate, and gradually the clatter of the horses’ hoofs died away in the distance.

Lady Dorothea’s grief at the sudden disappearance of her cousin, was deep and sincere; but after hearing from Eppie a distinct account of every circumstance attending her flight, she cherished a hope that Lord William would succeed in rescuing her from the lawless men, into whose hands she had unhappily fallen. Eppie, unable to rest in any place, rambled all night through the castle, meeting, occasionally, in her peregrinations, with Simon, who let no opportunity escape of descanting on the enormity of her offences.

“Ye may weel greet, ye Jezebel, that I should ban; but whatfor, Mistress Eppie, did ye no gang with them? Ye had sma’ sense to come back here to be hanged, as nae doubt ye will be in gude time. This comes o’ your hiddling work. Hech, sirs, to think o’ the Lady Maude rinning

awa with the black Douglas, ane that has neither house, lands, nor country, as a body may say!"

"It's a base lie," retorted Eppie; "Lord William is like a man beside himsell—he kens nac mair where the Lady Maude is than yoursell. Do ye think I would greet, if she was with him? I'm no such a gowk as that comes to. But you're no worth speaking to." And Eppie once more resumed her wanderings through the now deserted castle.

Unwilling as James Erskine was to inform Maude of the bad success of his mission, he found further delay impossible; and taking his way to Arnprior, was surprised, on arriving there, at the silence and quietness which prevailed. After many attempts to gain admittance, the gate was slowly opened by Simon, and close behind him stood Eppie, weeping bitterly.

"For Heaven's sake," said Erskine, "tell me what has happened;—who is ill?"

"We are a' veel in health, your honour," replied Simon, in a doleful tone; "but sair grieved in spirit."

"Haud out o' the gate," said Eppie, impatiently, "and let me get speech o' the Master,—Oh, hae ye got ony tidings o' her?"

“Of whom, my good girl?” asked he, in surprise.

“Hae ye no heard that the Lady Maude has been carried awa by the auld reiver, Arral? Sir John and a’ his folk are awa after him, and——”

“Where is the Lady Dorothea?” said he,—
“lead me to her without delay.”

Eppie hastened to obey him; and Lady Dorothea, with pale cheeks and quivering lips, advanced to meet him.

“Bring you any intelligence of Maude, dear James?”

“I grieve to say, I do not; in truth, I knew not of this sad affair till this instant. Tell me, dearest Dorothea, how all this has happened?”

Lady Dorothea briefly related all that had passed since they last met; and it was some alleviation to her distress to find the faith and constancy of her lover was unshaken.

“This is, indeed, most unwelcome news,” he replied; “but trust me, nothing shall be wanting on my part to restore our sweet Maude. I will go instantly to raise my people,—no time should be lost in tracing the villains.” And taking a lover’s farewell, the Master of Mar vaulted lightly on his saddle, and was soon out of sight.

CHAPTER XI.

The King leans from his chamber, from his balcony on high,
“What means this furious clamour my palace porch so nigh?”
Spanish Ballads.

It was yet early dawn when Sir John and his followers spurred rapidly up the steep ascent leading to the palace of Stirling. The noise of the horsemen drew the inhabitants to their doors.

“I wonder what new stramash this is,” said an old burgess of that ancient city to his neighbour. “I wish a’ may be right; but I dinna like this riding and ringing through the town—Gude forfend us a’ frae the black Douglasses!”

“We winna be fashed with them ony langer,” was the response; “for every mother’s son o’ them, with their kith, kin, and allies, are put to the horn.”

“He is a dour-looking carle that gangs fore-

most," said the first speaker, looking after Sir John; "he has taken the road to the palace. I doubt if the nobles are stirring yet, for the King had a grand splore last night. Folks say that he and his lords keep a fu' house—My word, he is making up for the time he was keepit in jeopardy by the Earl o' Angus."

"He maun hae his play-time," rejoined his companion; "but when once he gets ower his daffing, I'se warrant he will make a right gude king, and bring the realm into strict governance."

"The sooner the better," replied the other, "for it's thought there will be an outbreak among the Arrals; they were hauding a gathering last night, so we will no be lang o' hearing o' some affray; but I doubt the King is mair taken up thinking o' the grand hunting match that he is going to in Athole, than with seeing his subjects righted. There's a great sough in the country about the fair palace that the Earl has biggit for the King to take the diversion o' hunting—they say it's decoired like anc o' the royal palaces. The falconers passed out yesterday with the hawks; so I fancy the King will no stay long behind them."

Sir John, meanwhile, had reached the palace,

and demanding to see the Earl of Cassilis, he was soon joined by that nobleman, whose appearance testified that the preceding night had been spent in revelry.

“Welcome to Stirling palace, Sir John,” said the Earl; “comest thou to attend our monarch to Athole, whither he wends to-day? By my faith, your early journey hither should shame us all, laggards as we are.”

“No, by the mass!” retorted Sir John; “I come not here for pastime or carouse, but on a matter which will not brook delay. I must have speech of the King, and that speedily; so call his chamber chiefls, Gilbert Kennedy, and see if he may be spoken with.”

“I know not,” rejoined Cassilis, “if I may intrude on him at this early hour.”

“Not intrude?” said Sir John; “now, by our Lady, the King’s ears should be open, by night or by day, to the complaints of his people—Not intrude, forsooth! this comes of midnight carousals. But since the King will not right me, by Heavens, I’ll right myself!”

“Nay, Sir John,” replied Cassilis, “I pray you have patience, and——”

“Patience, Cassilis?” said the knight,—“dost

dare to preach patience to me, who have such a matter in hand? But I have staid here too long bandying words, which is likely all that I will get."

"Stay one moment, Sir John," said the Earl, "and as the affair seems pressing, I will do your bidding to the King."

"Be speedy, Cassilis," said the knight, "for I will not tarry."

The Earl passed on to the chamber of the King, and struck gently on the door. "Who is there?" cried James in an impatient tone. "In the fiend's name, come in. By the mass, Gibby Kennedy," continued he, as the Earl entered, "thinkest thou that we can carouse all night, and yet rise at the first blush of the dawn? We set not forth for Athole till midday—Faith, we will have another hour's sleep, if all the saints in Christendom were to bid us rise—that malvasy swims still in my head—Prithee, man, tell thy errand and begone."

"Please your Grace," replied Cassilis, "here is the Knight of Arnprior, who craves an audience on affairs of deep importance."

"Ay, to him, perchance," replied the youthful Monarch; "a herd of cattle driven away, or some brawl with his unruly neighbours. Go, bring us some tidings of his business ere we rise."

The Earl now returned to Sir John, whom he found impatiently pacing the apartment; but on desiring Sir John, either to relate his business to him, or wait the leisure of the King, the knight's wrath burst forth.

“Is it come to this? will not James lose an hour's rest to right his subjects? Tell him that my daughter, that Maude Buchanan has been stolen from me—But what will he care for that? No, tell him that which will scare his slumbers,—shout in his ear that the Black Douglas is the robber, who, braving his power, and defying his menaces, has audaciously committed this outrage even at the mouth of the lion's den. Let James Stuart look to himself—I scorn his aid—I'll right myself, by heavens!—To horse!” cried Sir John, as, with a dark frown and flushed brow, he strode out of the apartment, unheeding the Earl's attempts to detain him.

“Well, Gibby,” said the King, raising himself on his elbow on seeing Cassilis enter the chamber, “what says the knight?”

“Please you,” replied the Earl, “he cried to horse, and is off, because he had not instant speech of your Grace.”

“ By my faith, he is an uncourtly loon, not to wait our leisure.—But what wanted he ?”

“ He brought news your Grace will but ill like to hear. Lord William Douglas has been lurking near this for a space, and has carried off the Lady Maude Buchanan.”

A glow of fierce anger rushed to the face of the King, fire sparkled in his eye, and with one bound he sprung out of bed, and exclaimed, “ After him, Cassilis ; bring him back, I charge you ! Command our warders to bar his passage. He leaves not this till we have spoken with him—He may perhaps enable us to track this bold traitor—By heavens, his audacity stirs my blood !—Bring the knight hither, Cassilis, and that speedily.”

The Earl hastened from the chamber, and James, having completed a hurried toilet, strode impatiently through the apartment. After a brief space, Cassilis again appeared, followed by Sir John, whose dark cheek still retained its angry flush as he stalked haughtily forward.

“ Faith, sir knight,” said the King, frankly advancing to meet him, “ you have some reason to be vexed with us ; but ’tis all the fault of that bungler, Cassilis, who was too slow in telling thy errand. Have you certain assurance that it is the traitor

Douglas, who has committed this outrage? We can scarce believe that he would venture into the bounds of Scotland."

"By Saint Andrew," exclaimed the knight, "he has not only been within the bounds of Scotland, but at the very verge of your highness' court! And last night," he continued, while he dashed away a tear, "he dared to carry away my daughter, my poor Maude, and I came here to ask for aid to rescue her."

"If they are above ground," replied James, "they shall be found. But have you no clew to guide your search? To what place, thinkest thou, has he carried the fair Maude?"

"To Tantallon Castle, I fear me," replied Sir John.

"Tantallon Castle!" said James, hastily; "now, by our Lady, if it prove so, we shall level the traitor's stronghold in the dust. But perhaps they may be overtaken ere they reach that fortress. Cassilis, you will accompany the knight; take with you a body of archers, and let the pursuit be hot. By Heavens, we will neither know rest nor peace till the daughter of this good old knight is restored to him. And, Cassilis, proclaim a princely reward to him who shall achieve the deed. By the mass,

were it not for our kingly state, we would ourself lead the chase. We long to measure swords with Douglas. By mine honour, in such a cause, the clash of arms would sound to us more sweet than the note of the cushat dove—But it may not be. Hie thee, Cassilis, and order out the troops. Farewell ; may success attend thee.”

“ Now, by Heavens,” exclaimed the knight, striking his sword, “ I will cut the weasand of him who dares to say that thou art less than king ! Here is an arm which will ever be raised in your defence, as long as this old carcase is above ground. Pardon my rough and brief speech. I lack courtly arts, and cannot stay to learn them.”

“ Our Lady speed you,” replied the King ; and the Earl and his companion hastily left the chamber. The hurried arrival of Sir John and his followers, his interview with the King, and subsequent departure, accompanied by a large body of archers, caused a considerable sensation in the town of Stirling. Some said that the clans in the west were rising—others maintained that the troops were sent to intercept the Earl of Angus, who was advancing on Stirling, with the view of seizing on the King’s person ; and the honest burghesses were still engaged discussing these and

many other conflicting reports, when James and a princely train of nobles issued from the castle gate, and passing swiftly through the town, the youthful Monarch checked not his speed to receive the homage of the citizens, who failed not to remark those traces of recent agitation which he in vain laboured to conceal, as he bent his head over his saddle-bow, and pressing onwards, was soon lost to their gaze.

CHAPTER XII.

They hadna ridden in the bonnie green wood,
 Na, not a mile, but barely ane,
 When there came fifteen o' the boldest knights,
 That ever bare flesh, blood, or bane.

* * * * *

But up then spoke the second knight,
 I wat he spoke right boustousle,
 "Yield me thy life, or thy lady bright,
 Or here the tane of us shall die."

Erlinton.

He's mounted her on a milk-white steed,
 And himself on a dapple grey,
 With a bugelet horn hung down by his side,
 And lightly they rode away.

The Douglas Tragedy.

LET us now turn awhile from Sir John and his companions, to trace the steps of the stranger knight, who, loving Maude with deep and devoted tenderness, had heard of her sudden disappearance with grief and dismay.

He too kept up a hot pursuit of the fugitives, and insensible to fatigue, thought not of rest or

shelter, till the trembling limbs and flagging gait of his horse, reminded him of the distance he had travelled. Compassionating the state of the noble animal, the knight relaxed his speed, and looked around for a place capable of affording refreshment and shelter for the night, which was rapidly drawing on. The knight had now entered a deep dell, where the elm, the mountain-ash, Scottish pine, and holly, were beautifully mingled with the willow, weeping birch, and arbutus, which surmounted the precipices that rose on each side of the narrow way, which seemed to be cut out of the solid rock, or formed, perchance, by some great convulsion of nature, which had rent asunder the frowning mountains.

The knight looked anxiously round, but could descry nought which betokened the vicinity of man. Most gladly would he have welcomed the sight of the smoke of a cottar's chimney, or the bark of the shepherd's dog, but he saw nothing save wood and sky, heard nothing but the shrill scream of the plover, and the wind sighing through the pine-tree tops.

“I'faith, Rayner,” said the knight, stroking gently the neck of his favourite courser, “I fear me you and I must be content to take up our quarters

in one of these deep caves which yawn in the mountain side ; and yet, I like it not, danger may lurk in their dark recesses—no, no ; let us keep on in the open way, and soon shall ample food and rest reward your toil.”

The knight then gently urged on his panting horse, and had reached the entrance to the cavern, which he was just about to pass, when a ruffian rushed from it, and seizing his bridle rein with one hand, and presenting his weapon with the other, commanded him with oaths and execrations to surrender his gold. The knight, startled by the suddenness of the attack, paused for an instant, then collecting his strength, he with one stroke of his dagger severed the hand which grasped the bridle, and the ruffian with a yell of despair, then fled into the cavern.

“By mine honour,” ejaculated the knight, “this is an adventure I looked not for—Beshrew me,” he continued, on seeing some one stealing softly through the coppice ; “beshrew me, but this seems the devil’s own den—villain, advance not on your life.”

The person thus addressed leapt boldly into the road, and approaching the knight with an intrepid step and fearless aspect, exclaimed, “Fear no harm

from me, sir knight ; I was accidentally passing this way to my home when I saw you beset, and hastened to give you that aid which your own valour has rendered unnecessary."

"You speak fair, my friend," replied the knight ; "but how do I know that you are not a confederate of the ruffian who has hied him to his bloody lair ?"

"By this token," replied the man, "that I know this mountain path so well, I could tread it blindfold, and that had I meditated evil against you, I would have chosen for my purpose a spot where even your valour would not have availed you."

"And wherefore didst thou not meditate evil against me ? You are of a race," he continued, as he glanced at the swarthy cheek and dark flashing eyes of the speaker, "who are not over scrupulous in helping themselves to other men's goods. Why, I pray you, have I found so much favour in your sight ?"

"Why, but that I love your bold speech and undaunted mien. This blade," he added, suddenly pulling a long knife from his bosom, "has let out the base blood of a craven before now ; but you are of better mettle—and yet I know not, in the fiend's

name, why I should wish to spare you, for you are courtly in your mien though blunt in speech, and are perchance one of those empowered by the King to hunt us through wood and glade, to deliver us up to the tyranny of the Lord of Little Egypt."

"Aha," replied the knight, "then thou art one of those gipsies who have disobeyed and deserted their leader. 'Twould be a good deed to deliver you to him you are bound to obey."

"Meddle thou not in this matter," replied the gipsy, "but rather look after thine own safety, which is deeply periled by tarrying here. Know you not that this cave communicates with a castle up the glen, and which belongs to the lawless clan of the Arrals, who lie in wait at the mouth of the cave to rob and murder unwary travellers?"

"By mine honour," exclaimed the knight, "'tis a foul blot on James of Scotland, that he roots not out such a villainous brood; but perchance he knows not of the deep misrule which prevails. I will carry him this bloody token of the disorders which afflict his subjects, and arouse him to redress their wrongs." And the knight lifted up the still warm and bleeding hand of the robber.

"Ride on then and that quickly," said the gip-

sy, "before your assailant has time to bring down his confederates from the castle."

"Faith," replied the knight, "I am a stranger in these parts, and know not where to obtain shelter. Canst help me, man? for I will frankly trust thee, despite of thy lawless life."

The gipsy answered promptly, "Swear to me by the honour of a knight, that you will not betray our place of concealment, and I will give you food and shelter."

"I swear," said he, kissing the cross of his dagger.

"Then follow me," replied the gipsy, as he preceded the knight with light and active steps.

In silent haste they traversed the glen, nor did they slacken their pace till they penetrated into a thick forest, where the tangled brushwood retarded their steps, and almost arrested their progress.

The moon had not yet risen, and the faint starlight scarce penetrated the gloomy forest, but the gipsy boldly and fearlessly threaded the mazes of the wood, the silence of which was unbroken save by the crashing of the underwood, as the knight forced his steed through the narrow path, and dived deeper into the recesses of the wood. On a sudden, the breeze brought to them sounds of mirth

and revelry, and the knight, listening attentively, heard the following stanzas sung by a jovial, yet rude and untutored voice :—

We live by day, we live by night,
We live by fraud, we live by fight ;
The lightnings flash, the thunders roll,
But still we stir the flowing bowl ;
For what for hurricanes care we,
Who spend our lives right joyously,
Beneath the shade of greenwood tree ?

We meet our prey, we bid him stand ;
He yields,—if not, we use our brand ;
He dies, we thrust him in a hole,
And then we stir the flowing bowl ;
For what's his death to such as we,
Who spend our lives right joyously,
Beneath the shade of greenwood tree ?

A comrade falls, or Carl or John,
We dig a trench, we plant a stone ;
We say good journey to his soul,
And then we stir the flowing bowl.
Of bug-bear death, how careless we,
Who spend our lives right joyously,
Beneath the shade of greenwood tree !

By the close of the last stanza, the knight and his guide had reached a small open glade ; the gipsy then desired the knight to alight, who, after fastening his horse to a tree, followed his con-

ductor, who, forcing asunder some thick bushes, discovered the entrance of a spacious cavern, brightly illuminated by a blazing wood fire, whose flickering light fell on a party of gipsies, who seemed in deep carousal, and who welcomed with loud shouts the return of their associate.

“A good song, by my faith,” said the knight, as he stept boldly into the cavern. On hearing the voice of the stranger, the gipsies started to their feet, and drawing their knives, glared upon him with flashing eyes.

“Stand back, Nona Finco, stand back,” said the stranger’s guide; “put up your knife, Anteane Donea, this bold youth has ventured here on the faith of my word, and ye shall not touch a hair of his head.”

“Ye take too much upon ye, Demeo Matskalla,” replied the first speaker; “wherefore dost thou betray our retreat to those who may give James’ bloodhounds the scent of our hiding-place? An I thought this springald were come to spy our company, I would drive this through his base heart.” And the gipsy brandished his weapon. The knight looked on him with an undaunted eye, and the colour left not his cheek, even on seeing the danger into which his rash confidence had betrayed him. He fearlessly and promptly replied,

“ By my honour, friend, your secret is safe with me—I am here a trespasser on your hospitality for food and shelter, and far from me be the base thought of requiting it with treachery. Away with mistrust and doubt, pass the drinking horn, and shout forth another stave of the merry song.”

“ You crow boldly,” said Nona Finco, “ but—”

“ He does so,” said Demeo Matskalla, “ and well he may, for my life is pledged for his safety; he rests here till dawn, and shall depart scatheless, or——” And a menacing gesture filled up the pause. “ How now,” he continued, looking to a dark corner of the cave, where lay a man enveloped in a large cloak,—“ Whom have we here?”

“ A prisoner,” replied the gipsy, “ whom we met near the forest. He was riding as if chased by the devil; we beset him, dragged him off his horse, lightened him of his purse, and brought him here to prevent him from giving an alarm. He fought like an incarnate fiend, and so did his follower, to whom I gave a taste of my knife, that sent him backwards over his horse. This has been our employment, while you, in place of gaining gold or provisions, bring hither benighted travelers, forsooth, to eat up the little that is left.”

“ And eat he shall,” replied his protector.

“Clear thy brow, Nona, and let us make a merry night of it, for we must shift quarters with the dawn, before your bloody deed brings our enemies here to drag us to the scaffold.”

“Take thy own way,” retorted Nona; “but I swear this shall be less than a mirthful night to some of us;” and the three gipsies suddenly left the cavern. Demeo then placed some coarse provisions before the knight, who cheerfully betook himself to the repast.

“I have little to offer you,” said the gipsy; “our meals are few and scanty enough; we, who lead a wandering and unsettled life, must suffer many hardships; but that we live in freedom compensates well for all.”

“And by my troth,” said the stranger, “I doubt not you have your hours of mirth in a summer’s day under the greenwood tree; faith, I like myself to wander uncontrolled save by my own humour. It is a pastime which has just danger enough to give it some degree of interest. Small thanks to Arral that I sit here in safety: I thought that bold reiver harboured near Stirling.”

“He does so commonly,” replied the gipsy; “but he has a fortalice up the glen, which he visits from time to time, when he has any villainy in hand, which I guess to be the case now.”

“ When came he here ?”

“ Scarce twenty hours since, and he had an unwilling traveller in his company, if one may judge by her cries for help.”

“ What say you ?” eagerly said the knight,—
“ heard you a woman’s voice ?”

“ Ay, that I did, but they quickly muffled up her head, and I saw nought save the long fair hair which streamed over her shoulder. She rode between Arral and his son ; but I knew by her sobs she would rather have been laid in the deepest pool of the Carron.”

“ Now, by the mass !” exclaimed the knight, starting to his feet, “ this can be no other than Maude Buchanan. Heard you not that she has been carried off from her father’s hall, and, it was believed, by the traitor Douglas, whom the King has sworn to hang as high as Haman ?—and James has also promised a purse of gold to him who restores the damsel.”

“ How !” replied the gipsy ; “ has that generous maiden fallen into Arral’s hands ? We must hasten to her rescue ; but the enterprise is not without danger.”

“ Talk not to me of danger,” returned the knight ; “ I would peril both soul and body to

rescue her. Oh! for twenty stout archers at my back; but we lack time to summon help. Stretch thy invention, good Demeo, assist me to save the lovely Maude, and when I hold her in safety in my arms, I will double, ay triple, the reward promised by the King.—Knowest thou of any inlet to the castle?”

“There is one way,” answered the gipsy, “but which is all but inaccessible to the foot of man.”

“In such a cause, methinks, I could scale a precipice—Say on.”

“In former times the castle was a place of great strength, being built on a steep rock, and surrounded by a deep fosse. In the precipitous side of the rock there was cut a secret stair, by which the inhabitants of the castle could, when besieged, supply themselves with water from the rivulet below. The castle is now scarcely habitable, and from neglect, the stair is nearly filled up with earth. It is by this way alone that we can hope to deliver the lady, for the passage through the cave is guarded by night and by day.”

“In Heaven’s name, let us essay the adventure. I am ready to set forth on the instant.”

“Nay,” replied the gipsy, “that must not be; let us wait till the moon is up, we shall require

her light to enable us to scale the ascent. But if you have not a bold heart, an agile foot, and an eye which can look unmoved on extreme peril, ye lack what is necessary for accomplishing the adventure."

"I shall let my actions answer for me," replied the knight.

"Good," answered the gipsy. "Rest yourself here, then, while I take food to your horse; his utmost speed will be required to carry the lady out of the reach of pursuit, should her flight be soon discovered."

"I am not without hope of meeting other aid also," said the knight. "But when we do gain an entrance into the castle, how shall we discover the part where the fair damsel is confined?"

"Faith," replied the gipsy, "we must e'en trust to chance for that—however, this much I know, that it is the western side alone which is habitable; and there we must direct our search."

"We waste time," replied the knight; "hie ye on your mission, and let the thoughts of the rich reward awaiting you, stimulate your courage."

The gipsy departed, and the knight, impatient of delay, began hastily to pace the spacious cavern, through which the half-consumed brands shed a

dim and fitful light, which glanced on the jewelled dagger and silver-tipped bugelet horn of the stranger. The richness of the jewels having excited the cupidity of the three other gipsies who had opposed his reception into the cavern, they seized the opportunity of Demeo's absence to plunder their unsuspecting guest, and rushing into the cave, two of them threw themselves on the knight and pointed their knives at his breast, while the third snatched the dagger from his belt, and then endeavoured to detach the hunting-horn from his neck. The knight struggled fiercely with his assailants, and getting one hand at liberty, with a single blow he stretched one of the gipsies on the ground, where he lay without sense or motion.

“Stab him, cut his weazand!” shouted the gipsies, and the stranger believed his last hour was come.

At this instant, the person who had been reclining in a corner of the cave seemingly unconscious of all that was passing, suddenly sprung up, and seizing one of the gipsies in his powerful grasp, hurled him to the earth—the gipsy aimed a blow with his knife—his antagonist snatched up the dagger of the knight which lay near him, and drove it up to its hilt into the heart of the robber,

when seeing the stranger deprived of his arms and about to fall a sacrifice to the fury of the other assassin, he hastily drew out the dagger, and the blood spouted up, and stained with crimson spots the roof of the cave. At this sight, the gipsy who still struggled with the knight, suddenly relinquished the combat, and fled from the cavern.

“Generous stranger!” said the knight, with warmth, “but for your timely aid I would have fallen in an ignoble combat; for this, accept my thanks, and I trust the time will come when I shall be able to prove my gratitude by something more than empty words; but we are surrounded by treachery, and have scarce light to distinguish friend from foe;” and the knight stirred the sluggish brands till the red blaze burst forth, and illuminating every part of the cavern, gave to view his preserver gazing on him with eyes which sparkled with resentful fire, while a deep glow of indignation suffused his cheek and brow.

“How!” exclaimed the knight, starting in mingled anger and surprise; “am I so unhappy as to owe my life to *thee*?”

“Let not that disturb you,” replied Lord William; “I am ready to obliterate the obligation at the sword’s point, unless you relinquish instantly

your base designs on Maude Buchanan, and swear never to see her more."

"Now, by our Lady," exclaimed the knight, "'twould foully stain mine honour, were I to cease to press my love-suit to the damsel at thy command. I tell thee frankly, I love Maude Buchanan, and will win her love or die!"

"Die, then!" exclaimed Douglas, rushing forward as he spoke.

"Stay thy hand, Douglas," said the knight, "and listen to me—Our hearts are full of hatred and revenge—one of us must fall—but let not a robber's cave be the scene of our death-strife—Follow me to the greenwood glade, where we shall find a more fitting place for our mortal combat, and there shall one of us breathe his last sigh under the canopy of heaven, and moisten the turf with his blood."

"Be it so," replied Douglas, as he followed the knight, who, after possessing himself of his weapons, pressed hastily on, the tangled brake crashing at every tread.

In a brief space Douglas and the knight reached a scene which might have inspired feelings of gentleness and peace in any breasts but those which were so soon to be opposed in deadly strife. They

stood in the midst of a mossy dell embosomed in the wood, where the flexible birch, the golden laburnum, and the drooping willow, seemed to twine together their luxuriant branches to bar all passage to creatures of this earth, and to preserve the turfy amphitheatre for those fairy beings, whose tiny feet had traced innumerable circles on the daisied sward of this their favourite haunt. Around this spot of tranquil beauty, rose gently swelling hills, clothed to their summit with verdant wood, from whose deepest recesses issued the wailing note of the wood-pigeon, and the melancholy hooting of the owl. The silver moon now appeared, pursuing in silent majesty her path through the clear blue heavens; and the wavy birch and tremulous aspin, stirred by the night breeze, quivered and danced in her bright beams, and threw on the flowery turf an ever-changing picture of radiant beauty.

As the knight gazed on the sweet sequestered spot, something perchance of the softness of the scene, stole over his mind, and his tone had in it less of pride and command, as he turned to Douglas, and said, “Why will you force me to raise my hand against one, who, at the risk of his own life, has saved mine? Let us part here—Choose

your own path, and go in peace and safety; you have nothing to fear from me."

"*Fear!*" retorted Lord William, with scorn; "it is for the foes of Douglas to fear. Though exiled and proscribed, they yet have power to repress injustice and revenge injury. Yet if you scruple to wrong me in my love, to inflict on me a cureless wound, I forgive your meditated baseness."

"How!" exclaimed the knight, striking violently the hilt of his dagger—"Forgive—baseness!"—He paused on a sudden, as the trampling of horses' feet was heard.—"If it should be so—" He raised his bugelet-horn to his lips, sounded three distinct notes, and the next instant half a score of huntsmen, armed with bow and blade, burst through the trees, and the fiery hoofs of their mettled steeds quickly laid waste the perfumed ornaments of the glade.

"How now, my masters?" said the knight, as the horsemen drew around him—"You have tarried long. Faith, I have found in this sylvan spot more game than ye wot of."

"We lost your track," replied one of the horsemen, "and have wandered——"

"Nay, stay not for explanation; but——"

Here the knight whispered a few words to his companion, who passed the order to the rest; and while three of the horsemen remained by the knight, the others, rushing on Douglas, disarmed him; and forcing him to mount on horseback, in another instant they and their struggling captive disappeared from view. The knight as quickly left the vale; and desiring the huntsmen to follow him, he sought the gipsy, whom he found near where his steed was resting from its toils.

“Who are these?” said the gipsy, bending an angry scowl on the new associates of the knight.

“Only brother sportsmen,” he replied; “but they crave a share in our adventure. We shall not need their aid to release the fair damsel; but they may be useful should we be surprised and attacked in our retreat. Lead on, my friend, and let the splendid guerdon you are about to merit, inspire you with unconquerable courage.”

“Forward, then,” said the gipsy; and the knight, vaulting lightly on his steed, followed his conductor through the mazes of the wood.

On arriving near the cave where Arral, or one of his band, had rushed out to attack the knight, the party trod softly, and preserved a perfect silence, but no one appeared to intercept their pro-

gress; and hailing the happy omen, the knight and his companion pressed onward with renovated hopes. As they wound on, the way became more steep at every step, and at intervals their passage was nearly barred by large fragments of rock, which, torn perhaps from the overhanging mountains, by some winter tempest, and hurled from above, lay in enormous masses on the narrow path. These difficulties, however, were no sooner encountered than overcome; and the party undauntedly pressed forward, till, skirting the hill, a sudden turn brought the fortress full in view. The knight reined up his horse, and gazed on the magnificent scene.

On a wild, rugged, and almost inaccessible rock, stood the castle, which, grand even in decay, reared proudly its time-worn battlements against the sky. A vast amphitheatre of wild and desolate hills rose immediately behind the castle, and forming a magnificent skreen, appeared to close round, and to guard the abode of some powerful enchanter, who from thence could summon the spirits of the wood and of the fell to obey his unhallowed mandates.

But this was no time for the indulgence of fanciful reveries; and the knight, springing from his

horse, and throwing the rein to the huntsmen, whom he ordered to remain below, began the perilous ascent. To attempt the less steep, but guarded entrance, the knight knew would be a wanton and useless sacrifice of life; it was, therefore, necessary to direct his efforts to gain an entrance by that side of the castle which its inmates deemed better guarded by its precipitous cliffs, than if watched by warder.

The knight paused but to examine his weapons, and then, followed by the gipsy, began the steep ascent. Toilsome and slow was his progress. The steps, which were cut in the face of the cliff, had never been deep, and now were almost choked up with earth. But the difficulty and danger of the enterprise only stimulated the ardour of the knight, who, with a light but firm foot, pressed steadily on, clutching at times at the ivy which shagged the precipice, from the crevices of which the perfumed violet peeped out, and the wild rose sent forth her buds of beauty. The noise of his ascent disturbed innumerable daws and kites, which, issuing from their nests in the fissures of the rock, wheeled round the bold intruder on their haunts, and filled the air with their complaints.

“But I shall not be your prey,” muttered the

knight ; “ and yet a step missed, a broken branch, and I lie in the ravine a mangled corse. But something within tells me it shall not be so.”

And the knight spoke not again, looked not around, till he stood in safety under the crumbling and broken wall of the castle. The knight remained motionless for a brief space, and drew a long and deep breath ; but a slight shudder ran through his frame as he looked down the dark precipice, and thought that he must retrace the dangerous way. But the recollection of the beautiful Maude infused new courage into his ardent soul, and he mentally vowed to save her, or perish in the attempt. In an instant he vaulted over the wall, which on this side was low ; and stealing softly along, reconnoitred the castle, where all seemed buried in profound repose. Not a sound was heard, not a light was seen, in the gloomy edifice, which seemed to be a fitting habitation only for the daw and the owl. The knight cautiously proceeded onwards, till he stood beneath a low grated window. He listened attentively, but all was silent as the grave. He passed to another,—the same stillness reigned ; to a third, and here he caught the sound of coarse revelry. Its inmates seemed to be rejoicing over the success of some exploit ; and what it was that

called forth their shouts of rude merriment, the knight too well knew ; and his anxiety to deliver the loved maiden from such rough associates, deepened with every passing moment. The gipsy had declared this to be the only habitable part of the castle ; and the knight had lingered beneath each window, yet had failed to discover any sight or sound to guide his search. He hastily retraced his steps to the window which had first attracted his attention.

“ This may be the silence of despair,” said the knight ; and placing himself under the casement, softly pronounced her name. A faint shriek was the answer. In a tumult of joy the knight again whispered, “ Maude, dearest Maude !”

“ Heavenly powers, who calls ?” and Maude herself, pale as the virgin lily, her eyes filled with tears, her fair hair hanging loose and dishevelled, stood at the grated window. On perceiving the knight, a suppressed cry burst from her lips.

“ Oh, welcome sight !” exclaimed Maude, as she passed her hand between the bars. “ Welcome, a thousand times welcome, generous stranger ! Already do I feel myself in safety. Oh, take me from this hateful place !”

“ For that purpose alone did I come hither,

dearest Maude," replied the knight; "but the manner of your escape is not without danger."

"I will brave danger in any shape but that of remaining here."

"This, then, must be the first step towards your deliverance," said the knight, as he essayed to remove the grating from the window.

Happily, for the fair prisoner, the mirth of her jailors becoming every instant more and more boisterous, completely drowned the noise made by her deliverer, as, with a powerful grasp, he wrenched the grating from the window, and in another instant received Maude in his arms.

"Lead on," said Maude, in breathless terror, as her ear caught the loud laugh of Arral, and his ruffian band.

"I have discovered a secret passage," replied the knight; "but as it is somewhat steep, its appearance may startle you. Let me place this bandage over your eyes—nay, do not deny me—our safety requires it."

Maude yielded, and the knight, throwing his arms round her, supported her to the edge of the cliff. Here he paused an instant, breathed a short prayer, then commending his precious burden to Heaven, he pressed her more closely to his breast,

and began the fearful descent. But bold as he was, even he dared not to cast his eyes downwards from his dizzy height, but kept his eyes resolutely fixed on the broken steps. One by one they are passed, and in a brief space Maude and her generous preserver stood in safety at the foot of the savage rock.

“ You are safe, dear Maude—you are safe !” exclaimed the knight, in a transport of joy.

Maude tore the bandage from her eyes, and looked around. “ Where are we ?—how came we here ?”

“ We are beyond the precincts of the castle,” replied the knight ; “ and as to our way, look there.”

Maude’s eyes followed his glance, and as she looked on the scene of their late fearful peril, a cold shudder ran through her frame. The huntsmen and gipsy, who had watched their descent with intense interest, now crowded round them ; but the knight was too much occupied with Maude to attend to their congratulations ; and yielding to her eagerness to hasten from the place before their flight could be discovered, the party quickly mounted, and rapidly pursued their journey.

When day began to break, the knight with con-

cern observed that Maude was so wholly exhausted as to be scarce able to hold the reins of her horse ; and he looked anxiously round for a place of shelter. They had now wound high up among bleak and barren hills, where human habitation there was none, save a shepherd's sheiling, perched on a rocky cliff, and to this they directed their steps. But no one was within, its solitary inmate having led forth his flock while the dews of night yet gemmed the blooming heather. The knight lifted Maude from her horse, carried her into the hut, where happily they found a store of milk and brown bread, which served to recruit their drooping strength.

With brotherly kindness did the knight tend on Maude, watching her every look and word ; and seeing how much she stood in need of rest, he withdrew, and throwing himself on the turf at the door of the hut, he was soon buried in profound repose.

After a lapse of some hours, he was awakened by the bright rays of an unclouded sun, when, starting from his heathery bed, he aroused the huntsmen, and taking two of them apart, held a short converse ; immediately after which, the gallant sportsmen mounted their horses, and rode off

by different ways. The noise of their departure having broken Maude's deep slumber, she arose, and hastily left the hut, at the door of which she was met by the knight, who rejoiced to see that the languor and paleness which had overspread her countenance had now given place to a vivid glow, and the gratitude which beamed from her beautiful eyes repaid him a thousand fold for the dangers which for her sake he had braved. The knight and his fair companion were soon mounted; one huntsman and the gipsy only attended them; but as they were now so far from Arral's stronghold, they dismissed all fear of pursuit, and after leaving a piece of gold for their unknown host, rode leisurely on, through an ever-varying scene of fertile strath and barren hill.

Impressed with the liveliest gratitude towards her preserver, Maude expressed her feelings with animation and vivacity; and as the knight gazed on her speaking countenance, his dark blue eye sparkled with brighter lustre. But some internal feeling seemed to check the expression of that admiration and love which he in vain endeavoured to conceal.

“There is yet one thing you must do for me,” said Maude.

“Name it, sweet maiden,” he replied.

“Carry me to my father.”

“By the honour of a knight, I swear that we are journeying now to him. I have certain information that he has joined the King at Athole, where James is now enjoying the amusements of the chase. Thither my duty calls me also; and there will you meet with one, in whose heart your loved image reigns.”

“No,” answered Maude, deeply sighing; “that cannot be. He whom I love will not be found in the courtly circle which surrounds our Monarch. Yet James’s kingly halls hold not a more noble youth than he whom a hard fate forces to wander unhoused, and pillow his head beneath the greenwood tree. Yet never, even while the star of his princely house shone brightest, did I love him with that devoted love which now fills my heart.”

“By mine honour,” said the knight, “the man who can excite such tenderness in a heart like yours, sweet Maude, cannot be destitute of merit. His is a fate which kings might envy.” And the knight sighed heavily.

CHAPTER XIII.

Mar. Confusion seize the knave ! Darest thou call me traitor ?
Old Play.

They have lighted frae their milk-white steeds,
And saftly enter'd in.
Rose the Red and White Lily.

LET us now return to the Knight of Arnprior, who, eagerly bent on the recovery of his daughter, spared neither man nor horse in the hot pursuit. With considerable difficulty did Cassilis succeed in persuading him to allow the archers to stop occasionally for rest and refreshment. This indulgence he granted as seldom as possible ; and unable to curb his impatience, would startle them from their brief slumber, with the cry of “ To horse ! to horse, and away ! ”

But speedily as he travelled, his journey was little more than half completed, when the whole troop made a sudden stop.

“What halt ye for, ye knaves?” exclaimed the knight.

“Be not so hasty, Sir John,” said Cassilis. “See you not that horseman coming down the hill at speed, making signals for us to stop? Mark you how he spurs his panting horse.”

“Let him spur on,” retorted the knight. “I see not why we must lag for him; if he wants speech of us, let him overtake us. On, archers, on!”

“Nay,” replied Cassilis, “wait but a few moments, and when once we set forward, I promise you we shall make up for lost time. By my faith, the horseman is no other than Lord Rothes, and he rides as if on a matter of life and death.—How now, my lord?” continued Cassilis, as the Earl checked his foaming steed. “Wherefore this haste?—I trust you bear no ill tidings.”

“My mission is a painful one,” replied Lord Rothes. “I bear the King’s command to arrest Sir John Buchanan on a charge of high treason, and to bring him instantly before his Grace.”

“Now, by the mass,” shouted Sir John, “I shall cleave to the saddle-bow the man who dares to call me traitor.” And he rushed on Lord Rothes sword in hand.

“Nay,” cried Cassilis, throwing himself between them; “put up your sword, Sir John. If Lord Rothes is acting by our King’s commands, myself and my archers must aid him in the execution of his duty; but we will examine into his credentials.—My Lord of Rothes, please you to give us some testimonials that his Grace has charged you with this mission.”

“This must witness for me,” replied Rothes, putting a ring into Cassilis’ hand.

“The King’s signet,” said Cassilis, with a troubled look.

“Even so,” replied Rothes; “and I charge ye all, in his name, to aid me in securing the Knight of Arnprior. His Grace’s commands are peremptory, that he be carried instantly before him.”

“Now, by Heavens!” cried Sir John, “I will smite to death the first man who dares to lay hands on me. What! think ye to stop a father on such an errand as mine?—Back, I say—back, on your lives!”

“Sir John,” said Lord Rothes, “I am commissioned by the King to tell you, that in this matter Lord William Douglas has been unjustly suspected; the Lady Maude is not within the walls of Tantallon Castle.”

“ You lie in your throat !” cried Sir John, transported by passion, and aiming a blow at Rothes.

“ Now,” exclaimed Rothes, “ were it not for your grey hairs, for that word I would slay you where you stand.”

“ Rothes,” said Cassilis, interposing, “ forgive him ; he knows not what he says ; the loss of his daughter has nearly distracted him.”

“ You speak truly,” replied Rothes ; “ and therefore will I forget his injurious words.—Yield thee, then, Sir John. Time presses, and we must hasten to the King.”

“ Ye may return as ye came, Rothes,” said Sir John ; “ but for me, I will not abandon the search for Maude at the command either of king or kaiser. But hark ye ; tell James from me, that when I have found my daughter I will seek his court, and proclaim there that the man who calls me traitor, lies most foully, were it the King himself who said it.—Now take your way, gallants, and I will take mine.” And the knight turned his horse’s head.

“ Nay,” said Rothes, “ this must not be. Archers, do your duty !”

“ Stir not, at your peril !” exclaimed Sir John, brandishing his sword. But his resistance was

vain. The archers closed round him, and dexterously parrying the blows which he dealt with unsparing hand, deprived him of his weapon, and placing him in the midst of the troop, the whole party set off at a round pace.

Meanwhile Maude and her gallant preserver were journeying on, stopping occasionally at some lone dwelling to rest their wearied steeds. The sun had long since sunk behind the hills, but the rays of the pale moon lighted their path, and shed a mild radiance on the scene. The savage sublimity of the country through which they passed had often called forth the admiration of the travellers as they wound up rocky defiles, where hill rising above hill, seemed to oppose their progress; or while they trod some mountain pass, known perhaps only to the bold hunter or fearless shepherd. But on reaching the summit of a steep hill, a scene of surpassing loveliness burst on their sight. From the height on which they stood, the travellers looked down upon an extensive vale, rich in wood and stream. In the midst of the plain was seen a stately palace, which seemed reared for the sylvan deity of the place. This fair dwelling was spacious and lofty—at every corner arose a high tower. There lacked not bartizan or fosse, drawbridge and port-

cullis ; but these warlike appearances seemed to be assumed but in sport, and more in character with the peaceful scene were the lovely green birks with which every part of this sylvan palace was entwined.

“ Here ends our journey, fair Maude,” said the knight ; “ and here, I trust, will commence a happiness which I hope will never cease but with your life. In the palace before us, James holds his court. Permit that I ride on to secure you fitting welcome. I would not that you should be seen by the King or any of his youthful nobles, till I have prepared them to render due respect to the loveliest of her sex. This gallant huntsman will guide you to the palace—our good friend Demeo, too, will remain to guard you. Farewell; we shall soon meet again.”

“ Farewell,” answered Maude, as the knight, bending to his saddle-bow, struck spurs into his horse, and passed swiftly on ; while Maude and her attendants pursued more leisurely his track. Maude attentively watched the progress of the knight ; nor could she refuse her admiration to his graceful form and gallant bearing, as he swept across the plain. As he approached the palace, he raised his buglelet-horn, and at the sound the draw-

bridge was instantly lowered, the gates flew open, and the hounds yelled loud and long.

In silence Maude rode through the rich strath, clothed with ancient wood. She also reached the drawbridge which still remained lowered, and the gate open. Her conductor, with an air of deep respect, took the rein of her palfrey, and led her into the court of the palace. Confused by the blaze of torches, and bewildered by the singularity of her situation, Maude drew her silk hood close over her face, and followed her conductors; nor did she once raise her eyes till she found herself alone in an apartment apparently prepared for her reception. The walls were hung with the finest tapestry; the floor was covered with scarets, medwarts, and flowers, forming a rich and fragrant carpet, from which Maude's light step pressed out the sweetest perfume. Fatigued and exhausted by the violent emotions she had so recently experienced, Maude sunk on a couch, from which in the next moment she started up in joyful amazement to throw herself into the arms of Lady Dorothea, who hastily entered the room, followed by the faithful Eppie.

“Maude, dearest Maude, how much you have suffered since we parted!—You look pale, dearest cousin.—Tell me by what magic you are restored

to us—How did you escape from Arral and his odious crew?”

Before, however, Maude could reply, Eppie interrupted the discourse. “Gude guide and preserve us a’! How muckle we hae to be thankfu’ for. May the muckle deil take that wild reiver, Arral, that I should ban. If the King doesna hang him up in a tow, he’ll no be worth a bodle—Hech sirs, I’m like to greet—my heart’s sair to see you sae disjasket, and your bonny hair, that used to be like threads o’ goold, a’ tangled that gate, and your bonnie blue een looking sae drumly and dowie.”

“Never fear, Eppie,” said Lady Dorothea, “but your lady’s eyes and tresses will shine again in all their lustre. Now, dear coz, I beseech you to relate your adventures. I die with curiosity to know who is the enchanter, who, by a stroke of his wand, has brought you here.”

“Nay,” answered Maude, “tell me first, how and why you came hither?”

“For the how,” replied Lady Dorothea, “I rode your pretty palfrey;—the why will cost me more words. I will not vex you by describing our grief and consternation at your disappearance, nor the rage of Sir John, who instantly set out in pursuit of his runaway daughter, leaving poor Eppie

and me to wander through the castle, weeping and lamenting your loss. Ah! how I wished to be a man, that I might arm myself with sword and dagger, and ride in chase of the miscreants. You will easily imagine with what joy I welcomed the Master of Erskine, and listened to his exculpation of the crime I was so unjust as to charge him with. His explanation was brief, and he hurried away to raise his people to pursue the daring villains who had carried you off; and I presume he is still engaged in this bootless chase. After he left us, many hours passed heavily away. No tidings reached us—not a soul approached the castle, and I was on the point of giving way to despair, when lo! the gallant Master of Kilmaurs broke in on my solitude, bearing the joyful tidings of your safety, and an order to travel hither without delay. I forthwith summoned Eppie and Simon to attend me. Kilmaurs rode at my saddle bow, and here I am.”

“This is a singular affair. Did you not try to learn from the Master of Kilmaurs how he knew of my being rescued from Arral?”

“In sooth, dear coz, I tried every means to draw the secret from him. I smiled, frowned, coaxed, and threatened by turns, but in vain;

he either could not, or would not tell me more than that you were in safety. On arriving here, I was placed under the care of Lady Athole, who conducted me to a splendid chamber, where I was served with every refreshment. Nothing, however, could be extracted from her stately ladyship, so I was forced to be contented with her promise that I should be taken to you the instant you arrived. But now for your adventures, fair coz."

Maude hastened to gratify the curiosity of her auditors, and as she proceeded in her narrative, many were their exclamations of wonder and surprise.

"It is most provoking, dear Maude," said Lady Dorothea, "that you do not know the name of your deliverer."

"It will gang hard wi' me," exclaimed Eppie, "if I dinna find him out. Could ye no gie me a notion, my lady, what like he is?"

"Have you forgotten, Eppie," said Maude, "the handsome stranger who sought shelter at your father's cottage the night I met Lord William there?"

"Gude safe us! is't him? My certie, he was as weel-faured a loon as a body would wish to see in a summer's day, and heartsome and blythe besides. Take my word for it, I'll find him out, if

he harbours about this place. For, though Mr Robin Powfowls bids me gang and sit in my lady's chamber, and he would send up a' sorts o' delicates, I'm never gaun to mind him, and will soon slip awa down amang the serving-men, and hear their cracks. There's an unco feck o' lords and ladies here, forbye their servitors. There's the Lord Rothes has, they say, nae less than fifty men ruffling in his livery; and Lord Argyll, his men are past counting; and——"

"Come, Eppie," said Lady Dorothea, "you must postpone this enumeration till some more fitting season. Your lady stands much in need of repose."

"That's weel thought o'," responded Eppie, who hung over her young mistress with warm affection; "a gude sound sleep and a sack posset will no be amiss—and I'll gang this minute and make Mr Robert Powfowls gie me some o' the fine things that he has such walth o' in the buttery;"—and away went Eppie.

"Let us see where this door leads to," said Lady Dorothea, opening a door at the extremity of the chamber. "Come hither, Maude.—Look," continued she, as Maude obeyed her call—"look what splendour is here! Beshrew me, coz, but you

have some powerful friend in this sylvan palace. Damask bed-hangings, pillows of scarlet broadcloth, coverlet tawney velvet. Why, Maude, you have a princely chamber to rest in."

"Speak not to me of rest," replied Maude; "my heart is sad, dear Dorothea, when I think what my father and Lord William are now suffering from uncertainty of my fate."

"But," asked Lady Dorothea, "did not your gallant deliverer say that you would meet your father here?"

"He did, and surely he could not mean to deceive; he seemed to speak with sincerity and truth. Yet, if my father is here, why am I not taken to him?—wherefore all this secrecy and mystery?"

"For that I can render you no reason," replied Lady Dorothea; "but my heart tells me all will be well. Cheer up, dear Maude; bethink you that we shall probably mingle with the gay circle here. The King, they say, is hourly expected, and a bevy of noble barons and knights are already assembled to wait his coming. Who knows what havock your charms and mine may make among them? but perhaps you are content with the homage of your unknown preserver. Ah, Maude! I fear me that a ray from his bright blue eye has pierced your fickle heart."

“No,” said Maude; “my brave deliverer has my esteem, my warmest gratitude, but no love, dear cousin.”

“Well, well; we shall not argue the point. Get you to bed, and rest that drooping head.”

“I will,” replied Maude, “if you will agree to share my apartment.”

“With all my heart. I have no objection to participate in the enjoyments which your good genius has provided for you.—Look, Maude, I vow this cabinet is filled with costly female attire! Your faithful sprite performs his part well. But here comes Eppie, and apparently full, of news.”

“Indeed,” said Eppie, “your ladyship is no far wrang; for I fell in wi’ a young chiel I kent lang syne. He’s now a follower o’ the Lord Eglington, and we got unco thick cracking about auld stories; so I described the stranger that took you out o’ Arral’s hands, and he’s positive sure it can be no other than the Lord Lyle; ‘for,’ says he, ‘Eppie, there’s no a mair gallant youth among the nobles. He lives mostly on his saddle, or roams about wi’ hawk and hound; he has a blythe smile, but a glozing tongue, so take tent o’ him.’ And besides a’ this, he came here no mony hours ago; so ye see, my lady, it maun just be him; but I

doubt there's little chance o' my seeing him, for I met Mr Robin Powfowls, and he was unco ill pleased to see me, and said I was on no account to roam through the gallery, for he had got strict orders to see that we got everything we wanted; and he was just coming up wi' a' kinds o' delicates for my lady. Indeed, for that matter, he's at the back o' the door wi' a server fu' o' capon and manchets, forby muscadel, and gude kens what a'. I'll bring it here in a minute."

Eppie soon returned, and Maude having partaken of some refreshment, retired to rest; and soon after, to the great joy of Lady Dorothea and Eppie, she fell into a profound slumber.

CHAPTER XIV.

“ One boon I crave.”—“ Speak freely out.”

“ One only boon crave I :

Strike off the young Earl's chains ; about
Thy gold I do not sigh.”

“ If so the Earl's life touches thee,
Thy voice hath earn'd it well ;

To freedom's light restored, shall he
To thee his glad thanks tell.”

Swedish Popular Poetry.

THE rays of a brilliant sun darting into the chamber, the tread of many feet passing through the corridor, the baying and yelling of the hounds, and the noise and bustle consequent on the preparations for the chase, quickly aroused our fair heroines from their repose. Eppie was delighted at being once more employed in arranging the sunny tresses of her young mistress ; and spreading out the contents of the cabinet, she selected the most costly apparel for her use ; but, to her great mortification, Maude desired her to replace

the splendid robes, and attired herself in a simple white boddice and light-green kirtle.

“Aweel,” said Eppie, “it’s a true saying, that a bonnie bride is soon buskit. You’re no like the same creature ye were last night; that fine sound sleep has brought back the light to your eye, and the colour to your saft cheeks. I would be real sorry to hear the court dames sneezing at my lady, and looking ower their noses at her, when, after a’, there maybe wouldna be ane o’ them to compare wi’ her, if the mounting were taken aff them.”

“Why, in good truth, Eppie,” said Lady Dorothea, “I think there is little chance of our being ashamed of this fair damsel. I never saw her look more touchingly beautiful.”

“Ye may say that,” retorted Eppie; “she’s just like a new-blown rose. Now, my lady, when ye are in the King’s company, as nae doubt ye’ll soon be, what will hinder you to ask a quiet word o’ him, and just to tell him the plain truth, that Lord William has been sair misca’d among them? and I’m thinking, that if he gives Lord William back his gear, Sir John will be blythe to dance at your wedding wi’ him. And see that ye make the King say ay, or no, and dinna be feared for him; for

what is he, after a', but a man? My certie, I ne'er was frighted for ane o' his kind, and a' his folks hereabouts are muckle taken up wi' him; and the bit cottar bodies ca' him the King o' the Poor, and threep that his like hasna been seen for hundreds o' years. But now that ye are a' sorted, I will gang awa' and see if I can fa' in wi' my Lord Lyle, and tell him that ye are wearying sair to see him, and that ye dinna like to be mewed up here ony langer."

"You are over forward, Eppie," replied Maude, "and must carry no such message to the Lord Lyle; but go seek him, and say, that if it suits with his convenience, I will be glad to converse with him for a brief space; but be discreet and prudent, my good girl."

And Eppie, having promised to observe the strictest decorum, departed on her mission. The cousins whiled away the time of her absence in discussing the late surprising events, and in conjecturing what would be the issue of their adventures, when their discourse was interrupted by the return of Eppie, who, with eyes starting from their sockets, pale cheeks, and colourless lips, rushed into the room.

"Good Heavens!" exclaimed Maude, in alarm, "what is the matter?"

“ Oh, Bonnyblink and Lord William—Bonnyblink and Lord William ! How can I ever tell my lady ?” answered poor Eppie, bursting into tears.

Maude stood in mute affright.

“ For the love of Heaven, tell us what has happened !” said Lady Dorothea.

“ Wae’s me that I should live to see this day !” sobbed Eppie.

“ Compose yourself, my good girl,” said Lady Dorothea, “ and tell us what new misfortune has befallen us—Your lady is suffering all the agonies of suspense.”

“ I hae that to tell,” answered Eppie, “ which will bring her muckle grief and dolour ; but I’ll make my sorrowfu’ tale a short ane, for we maun seek for the King, and gang on our bended knees to him to spare their lives.”

“ What is that you say, Eppie ?” said Maude, in a tremulous voice ; “ who are in danger ?”

“ Them that we couldna bide to see cut their wee finger, far less hae their heads chapped off—But I’ll tell ye a’ about it. Ye maun ken that when I was ranging through the palace, seeking for the Lord Lyle, as I went past a wee bit low door, I heard somebody groaning and moaning, and so I thought to mysell here is some poor sick

body wanting something, and he has been clean forgotten in this hobbleshow about the hunting. I'll see what I can do for him ; so I tirded at the door, and getting nae answer but another groan, I e'en lifted the latch and went in,—and what think ye I saw ? Poor Bonnyblink in a bed, lying on the braid o' his back, wi' a face like paper, a muckle gash in his neck, and anither in his leg, and no able to stir hand nor foot ! I gied an awfu' skreigh when I saw him—he told me he was amaist killed dead in a fight wi' some robbers in a wood, who set upon Lord William and him, when they were seeking for you, my lady ; and after Bonnyblink was knocked off his horse, he kent naething o' what was done wi' him, till he found himsell in a horse litter travelling here, where he was put to his bed, and his wounds dressed. But this is no the worst—Oh, my dear lady, some folks o' the palace hae told him that Lord William Douglas was brought here a prisoner, and that he is shut up in ane o' the round towers ; and mair than this, that I dinna ken how many men hae been working since break o' day setting up a gallows in the North Wood there. Oh, what will become of us !” And a fresh burst of tears interrupted her speech, while Maude, pale as death, sunk into a seat.

“Cheer up, dearest Maude,” said Lady Dorothea; “do not, I implore you, give way to despair, when, if the damsel’s news be true, there is such a direful necessity for exertion; yet I can scarcely persuade myself to believe this tale.”

“Oh, wae’s the day, my lady, it’s ower true. I’m no feared for Bonnyblink, for readily the King will no think it worth his while to meddle wi’ a poor serving lad; but now that he has got haud o’ Lord William, I’m thinking he’ll no let go the grip. Yet he’ll surely no chap off his head before sae mony lords and ladies, and in the midst o’ sae muckle daffing, no to speak o’ hunting and hawking;—but I jalouse Lord William will get his doom ere long if somebody doesna speak for him to the King.”

“I will speak for him,” replied Maude, starting from her seat; “yes, at the feet of James I will plead for his life—this is no time for maiden bashfulness. Alas, alas! can it be that among all the knights and barons whom the Douglasses have loaded with benefits, there cannot one be found to intercede for this noble scion of their house?—can it be that nothing intervenes between him and death, but the tears of a helpless maiden? Go,” continued she, “fly, and say to the Lord Lyle,

that I must see him on the instant on a matter of life and death—he must lead me to the King, and join his supplications to mine for mercy—mercy, did I say?—for justice.”

And Eppie, awed by the passionate earnestness of Maude, obeyed in silence, and leaving the apartment, she hastened to seek for the clerk of the kitchen, with whom she knew herself to be in high favour.

“What brings you here, Eppie?” said he; “have I not told you twenty times over that it’s no for a bonny lassie like you to be stravaiging down here among sae mony men folks?” when, observing her watery eyes, he added, “but I dinna mean to put ony affront on you, my bairn, so take my advice kindly.”

“I’m muckle obliged to you, Mr Powfowls,” replied Eppie, half sobbing; “but if ye hae the heart o’ a Christian, bring me to the speech o’ the Lord Lyle.”

“Lord Lyle!” retorted he, in high dudgeon; “and what has the like o’ you to do with Lord Lyle? I’ll gang on no such errand, my woman.”

“But you maun do my bidding,” replied Eppie. “I dinna care a bodle for Lord Lyle, but he can serve ane for whose sake I would gang through fire and water.”

“Are ye speaking the truth, Eppie?” asked Master Robin, looking very suspiciously at the damsel.

“That I am, as sure as death.”

“Weel,” replied the old man, “gang awa’ back to your lady’s chamber, and stay there till I find out where he is—I doubt he’s aff amang the rest to look at some grand greyhounds that I heard the huntsmen cracking about—but I will try and get speech o’ him.”

And away went Master Robin, while Eppie, unwilling to return to her lady without being able to carry her some comfort, wandered from place to place, till she suddenly found herself in a splendid gallery, from which several passages branched off on either side. Being aware, from the magnificence of the corridors, that she was now in the very focus of grandeur, and afraid of the consequences of her presumption, she was about to make a retreat, when the noise of an opening door at the further end of the gallery, hastened her movements, and taking to flight, she turned into one of the cross passages, and blinded by haste and terror, ran right against a handsome youth, who at that moment was issuing from an adjoining apartment.

“How now, Mistress Eppie,” said he, with a merry smile; “on what errand of mischief are you bound?”

“Gude preserve us a’, my lord, is this you?—it’s wonderful to think o’ my luck in meeting you here. Master Robin Powfowls is ranging about seeking ye; but I shouldna put aff time havoring,—ye maun come with me to my lady this very minute—I darena go back without you; the Lady Dorothea is trying to comfort her, but I ken she’ll hae nae peace till she sees you—she says naebody but your lordship can do her ony good.”

“What has happened, my pretty damsel?”

“She will tell you hersell—I dinna like to be speaking about it here. I’m thinking we are ower near the King’s howff—black be his fa’—he maun hae a heart like a whinstane.”

“Hush, hush, my good girl—’Tis dangerous to hold such language here. Hie away to your lady—present to her my respectful homage, and entreat her to meet me alone, in the apartment of Lady Athole, half an hour hence. I meant to have craved the favour of an interview long since, but was engaged in special business with the King. Now hasten to the Lady Maude, and say that my best services are at her command.”

“I could have sworn to that ; and I hope,” continued Eppie, “you will forgie my want o’ manners at my father’s cottage. Little did I think that I was setting a lord to blaw the fire.”

“I wish, pretty damsel,” he replied, “that I may never be worse employed.”

“Deed, ye may say that,” responded Eppie, as she hastily took her way to her lady’s chamber, where her tidings of the Lord Lyle’s kindness and zeal dissipated in part Maude’s despair, and, with something like hope in her heart, she, at the appointed time, entered the apartment of Lady Athole—it was empty. Another instant passed, and her deliverer stood before her.

“Fairest Maude,” said he, as he gracefully approached and took her hand in his, “I grieve to see you thus distressed. What has happened to drive the life-blood from your cheek?”

“Brave knight,” replied Maude, in deep emotion, “I am consumed with mortal anguish by the threatened approach of an overwhelming calamity. Should this affliction befall me, better would it have been for me if you had thrown me from the precipice, rather than have preserved me for a life of misery.”

“Wherefore this passionate grief, dearest

Maude? Deign to confide in me, and, by the honour of a knight, I swear it shall not be in vain."

"Alas!" replied Maude, "when I reflect that it has been my fate to inspire you with an unhappy passion, I fear that I task even your noble nature too severely in imploring you to save the life of a rival.—Nay, start not thus away, but hear me. While in the height of his princely fortune, Lord William Douglas sought and won my love. I knew not then that my affection could admit of increase. But when sudden ruin fell on his house—when cast down from his high estate, an exile from his country—then did my heart glow with a deeper and more tender devotion. He is innocent of the violence used towards the King by his kinsmen—often has he lamented to me the bondage in which they kept the youthful Monarch—a disloyal thought never found admittance to his upright mind. But, alas! there is no distinction made between the innocent and the guilty—it is enough that he is a Douglas. He has fallen into the hands of the King. Oh, join with me in supplicating James to avert his doom!"

"Maude, what is it you ask? Know you not that a deadly feud exists between his house and

mine? Can you expect me to save one who has crossed me in love and in fortune?"

"I am lost!" exclaimed Maude, as she covered her face with her hands, to hide her streaming eyes and quivering lips.

"Not so, not so," he exclaimed with warmth; "forgive me these cruel words—nay, take comfort; these tears reproach me too bitterly. Listen to me, sweet Maude. A brief space since, my life was in extreme peril. Douglas witnessed my danger. He had but to stand aloof, and see his deadliest foe fall by an assassin's hand. He generously sprung to my aid; and to his dauntless bravery do I owe my life. I have just seen Douglas—our mortal resentment is appeased, and our feud is extinguished."

"Alas!" said Maude, "and must such honour perish?"

"No—by heavens, he shall not die!" he exclaimed. "We will seek James, and intercede for the gallant youth. If he has one spark of generosity in his nature, he will grant the boon. But I have yet another and a severer task to perform, Maude," continued he, dropping on one knee, "what could life avail Lord William, if I strove to take from him the treasure of your love?"

My own heart can best answer that question ; and here at your feet I renounce all hope of winning your affection. Rigid and stern honour commands me to make that sacrifice—I bow to her decree. Say but that you pity and forgive me, and I will strive to be content.”

“ Rise, noble youth, rise,” said Maude, while her warm tears dropped on his hand ; “ ever will your generosity live in my remembrance. Never shall I forget the vast debt I owe you.”

“ Not so,” replied the knight, “ rather blot the past from your memory—let it be to you as a midnight dream. Think only of the future—I trust I may say the happy future.”

“ Heaven grant it !” replied Maude. “ But when shall I see the King ? I long for, yet dread the interview.”

“ He is now in his private chamber. Let us seek him before he goes forth to the chase. Nay, tremble not—something tells me that your prayers and tears will prevail.”

“ Oh, that it may be so ! But my mind is in tumults. What would become of me without your friendly aid ! Where is my father ? Did you not promise that I should meet him here ?”

“ Sir John is expected every instant. I trust

he will soon arrive. Lean on me," said the knight, as, tenderly cheering and supporting her, he led her from the apartment, and, traversing a long gallery, arrived at the chamber of the King. As the knight laid his hand on the door, Maude started convulsively, and grasped his arm; he whispered a few words of encouragement, and they entered an apartment dimly lighted by several high windows.

Maude, half fainting with agitation, scarcely raised her eyes to a princely-looking youth, who hastily advanced to meet her, clasped her in his arms, and kissed her pale cheek, while the knight retreated and leant against the casement. Maude struggled indignantly.

"Am I brought here but to meet with insult? Unhand me instantly."

"Maude!" said a voice which penetrated to her heart.

"Who speaks?" she wildly exclaimed—"Did I not hear the voice of Douglas?"

"Yes, dearest Maude, it is he who presses you to his heart—the now happy Douglas, who, restored to the favour of his sovereign, and permitted to clasp you as his bride, scarcely knows how to support this weight of felicity."

Maude threw herself into his arms; he parted

her sunny ringlets, and kissed the tears from her quivering lids, and the stranger knight passed his hand hastily across his eyes.

“Can this bliss be real !” exclaimed Maude—
“Ah, I feared it would be my hard fate to weep your loss. To whom do we owe all this happiness?—Teach me where to tender my heartfelt gratitude.”

“This is my preserver,” said Lord William, leading her to the knight, who stepped gracefully forward to meet them. “Here pay your thanks and homage to Scotland’s noble King.”

Lord William bent his knee to his Prince; Maude, bewildered and amazed, threw herself at his feet.

With grave courtesy the King raised her up, imprinted a kiss on her fair forehead, then placed her in Lord William’s arms.

“Douglas,” he said, “I restore to you your honours and possessions; but well do I know they would be valueless, did I not add this fair maid to the gift. Take her, then, cherish her as the brightest gem of your house, and may the blessing of Heaven rest on your union !”

The lovers knelt at his feet, and when they looked up they were alone.

CHAPTER XV.

And some had tyres of gold sae rare,
 And pendants eight or nine ;
 And she, wi' but her gowden hair,
 Did a' the rest outshine.

And some, wi' costly diamonds sheen,
 Did warriors' hearts assail,
 But she, wi' her twa sparkling een,
 Pierced through the thickest mail.

The Murder of Caerlaveroc.

Then they have ta'en them to the holy chapelle,
 And there had fair wedding ;
 And when they cam to the king's court,
 For joy the bells did ring.

Rose the Red and White Lily.

CONSIDERING the circumstances of the case, it will scarcely create wonder that some hours elapsed before Maude sought her chamber to communicate to her cousin the joyful intelligence of the safety of Lord William, and his restoration to favour.

“All happiness attend you, dearest Maude,” said Lady Dorothea. “I shall rejoice most truly to greet you as the bride of Douglas. He is one of

the few men worth the trouble of loving. You are far gone in the tender passion, may Heaven help you !”

“ I am not, however, without companions in misfortune,” replied Maude, archly smiling. “ The Master of Mar little knows how many sighs his absence has occasioned. I trust, dear Dorothea, that the Earl will yet be propitious to your mutual affection.”

The faithful Eppie was in ecstasies at this happy turn of fortune.

“ And do ye ken, my lady,” said she, “ that the Arrals were brought here to-day and carried before the King ? and Mr Robin told me a long story about a bloody hand, but I was ower muckle taken up with our ain matters to heed what he was saying, but it is certain that the Arrals were hanged this very day on the gallows in the North Wood that we got such a fright about. And besides a’ this, my honest father is here in the train o’ the Earl of Mar. Mr Powfowls is very kind to him ; but I must gang awa’ now, and tell Bonnyblink the news.” And away went Eppie.

The day was far advanced before the King and his band of gallant barons were seen returning from the chase, which James had enjoyed with

unwonted spirit. The light of an approving conscience sparkled in his eye as he rode up to the sylvan palace, followed by his train, bearing the spoils of the chase; the jaded horsemen and limping hounds bringing up the rear.

On the evening of this eventful day the rays of the moon were paled by the brilliancy of the scene on which they glanced. In the midst of a splendid hall, blazing with innumerable torches, stood the youthful King. A jacket of cloth of gold, doublet of violet satin, and scarlet hose, showed to advantage his princely form; an embroidered baldric supported his sword, and he wore the knightly spur; a small black velvet hat, over which waved gracefully one long ostrich feather, completed his costume. James was surrounded by a bevy of fair dames and gallant nobles, who with bright smiles and mirthful words heightened the gaiety of the King.

“Has Sir John arrived, Athole?” asked the King.

“Not yet, your Grace; but I look for him every moment.”

“Go, then, meanwhile, and inquire among the Earl of Mar’s followers for an old man called John Donaldson, and bring him before us. We owe him

thanks for his frank hospitality, and for which we must find some reward.”

In a short time Athole returned, followed by John Donaldson, who, with his eyes fixed on the ground, made his obeisance to the King, and expecting some discourse on hawks and hounds, awaited in silence the King's commands. Eppie, always on the alert, had heard that her father had been summoned before the King; and curious to know what had obtained him this high honour, she stole into the hall, and placed herself behind a colossal piper, whose broad and waving tartans completely screened her from observation. Unfortunately, however, for Eppie, her station was near the door at the extremity of the hall, and the noise occasioned by the passing and repassing of the nobles, prevented her from hearing the conversation between the King and her father. Her ears, therefore, being of no use to her, she was forced to content herself with watching every movement and gesture of the merry monarch.

“ Ah, friend John,” said the King to his host, “ how fares it with you and your good old dame? By my fey, you may tell Maggie, that we have not seen such another fat hen since the night we lodged with you on the moors.”

At the sound of his voice the old man stared at the speaker, and stood rooted to the spot, on discovering his unknown guest in the person of the King.

“By mine honour,” continued James, “we had a merry night of it. Your life is not so solitary as one might suppose; the passing stranger often enlivens your lonely dwelling. If our memory does not play us false, you had more guests than one that night. You kindly sheltered a fair doe, and for that you merit our thanks. Kneel down, old man—A sword, my lords, a sword.”

Athole presented his, and James seizing the weapon, prepared to strike, when at this moment a loud shriek was heard, and Eppie, bursting from her concealment, rushed up the hall, and throwing her arms round her father’s neck, cried out, “Oh, gracious King, hae mercy on an auld man. Na, haud awa your sword; for I’ll no let ane o’ his grey hairs be touched. Would ye hae the heart to slay the auld man? How could he tell whether ye were a king or a cadger? He made ye welcome to the best in his house, and he could do nae mair. But if ye are sac sair affronted at being made to blaw the fire, that naething but blood will pacify ye, take mine, for it was me that bid ye; but ye

shall tear me to pieces wi' wild horses, before ye shall harm my honest father."

"How now, Mistress Eppie!" said James, with a good-humoured smile—"Where hast thou come from? By my fey, you do us less than justice in believing we would so requite the kindness of our worthy host. Stand aside, my pretty damsel."

Thus admonished, Eppie released her father; the glittering weapon descended on his shoulder, and James exclaimed with a loud voice, "Rise, John Donaldson, King of the Moors!"

Surprise kept honest John mute; but Eppie gave audible vent to her amazement—"Gude guide us a', what will this world come to!—John Donaldson a king!—Weel, after that onything."

"As he will require an increase of revenue to support his new dignity, see, Athole," said the King, "that our treasurer furnishes him with fifty rose nobles to carry home with him.—And now, my pretty damsel, take your father down to the buttery, and see that he gets good cheer. Faith, we fear that your scarlet kirtle and brown hose will make sad work among our servitors; but they must e'en take their chance.—You may now retire." And Eppie, followed by her father, quickly withdrew.

“ May it please your Grace,” said the Earl of Athole, “ we have just heard that Sir John has arrived, and is safely lodged in the tower.”

“ Is all prepared?” whispered James; “ does the fair Maude wait in the adjoining chamber?”

“ She does, so please your Grace.”

“ Go,” said James aloud, “ go, Athole, and bring hither Sir John Buchanan, to answer before us to the charge of high treason.”

“ Faith, and please your Grace, I wish I may return skaithless; ’tis scarcely safe to meddle with the burly knight.”

“ We shall make it our business to tame him,” replied the King; “ so hie thee to his den, Athole, for we have much to do, and the night wears apace.”

When the Earl entered the chamber where Sir John was held a strict prisoner, he found the knight foaming with rage.

“ How now, my lord?” said he; “ things are come to a strange pass in this realm, when faithful and loyal subjects are treated like thieves or robbers. Canst tell me, man, how this has fallen out?”

“ In sooth, Sir John,” replied Athole gravely, “ I grieve to say that your loyalty seems more

than questionable—there are serious charges against you. If all be true that is said, I would scruple to stand this day in your place.”

“Whoever he be who has branded me with disloyalty, lies most villainously,” vociferated the Knight—“and I will prove my innocence with my good sword.”

“The King is graciously pleased to allow you an audience; I have his commands to bring you before him.”

“In the fiend’s name, let us go then,” said the Knight, as he followed the Earl, and strode up the hall, the ladies and barons hastily making way for him, as he passed onwards to the King.

“How, now, Sir Knight?” said the King, frowning on Sir John; “you bear yourself somewhat too boldly for one who stands arraigned of the heavy crime of high treason.”

“I deny the charge,” retorted the Knight; “I am as loyal a subject as any in broad Scotland. In this matter I have been most foully slandered.”

“That remains to be proved,” answered James, in a severe tone; “your honour at present is deeply stained, and you must answer to the charge.”

“Let him that says it prove it,” said Sir John,

proudly ; “ I defy him. There lies my glove—let my accuser take it up.”

With grave dignity the King stepped from the brilliant circle, and lifted the glove.

“ We accept the challenge,” said James.—“ My lords and knights, we pray your serious attention while we discuss this matter.—Sir John Buchanan, is it fitting that Scotland should have two kings? Answer truly on your life.”

“ By the mass,” retorted the Knight, “ I wish we may not find one more than enough.”

“ And yet,” resumed the King, “ we have indubitable proof that nothing less than a crown will satisfy your ambition ; that you have seized on our revenues, and usurped our state ;—what can you say to this accusation ?”

“ Shortly, that it is a base falsehood ; and that I will make the villainous lurdane eat his slanderous words.”

“ Less violence, Sir Knight, would better become the presence in which you stand ; but we shall quickly bring this matter to a conclusion. Tell me, on the faith and honour of a knight, do you not take on yourself the state, ay, and title of a king? In a word, are you not he whom men call the King of Kippen?—and did not some of

your audacious subjects rob our royal purveyors in the face of open day, and assert, to boot, that you were as much a sovereign as ourself?—Answer, we command you.”

At this mirthful turn to an affair which promised such different consequences, the courtiers laughed outright, and even James could not restrain a smile. Sir John, however, was by no means disposed to enter into their gaiety; and, enraged at having been made the jest of the court, his wrath blazed fiercely out.

“How now, James of Scotland, couldst thou find no one but the Knight of Arnprior to be the subject of thy scurvy jests? Wherefore hast thou so far forgot thy noble nature as to force me from the pursuit of my lost daughter, and bring me hither to make sport for thy ribald courtiers?”

“Nay, chafe not thus, Sir John,” said the King; “but take our harmless pleasantry in good part;—and for bringing you here, we will presently offer you a fair excuse.—Athole, do your duty.”

The Earl disappeared through a door close to which James stood, and returned the next instant leading in Maude, who, springing forward, threw her arms round Sir John’s neck.

“You accept my excuse, then?” said James with a merry smile.

“By the mass,” shouted the knight, “this is surely glamour! your Grace must deal in the black art.—Where hast thou been, Maude, and with whom?”

“Of that hereafter,” said the King. “But, Sir John, what say you to giving this fair damsel to a husband’s keeping? We have chosen for the lovely Maude such a mate as the proudest of our dames might envy.—Douglas, come forth.”

Lord William advanced and bent his knee to his Prince.

“Rise, Douglas,” said the King; “and rather pay your homage at this fair shrine. Be this our office,” he continued, joining their hands. “Your blessing, Sir John, on the betrothed. In brief space we shall wend to Stirling Palace and celebrate the bridal. Meanwhile, my lords and nobles, let mirth and revelry rule the night, till the braes of Athole echo with the joyful merriment of The Three Kings.”



THE RESCUE.



THE RESCUE.

FROM THE GERMAN OF DÖRING.

CHAPTER I.

Masaniello. (*With frightful composure.*) It is resolved!—
Now do I know the path which I must climb.

Laura. Why glare thine eyes so fiercely? Oh, be calm:
Why clench thy hand and knit thy brows so sternly?
What wouldst thou do? These men, indeed, were hirelings,
And but fulfill'd their duty.

Masaniello.

“WILL this midnight journey never have an end?” said the young Adeline, in a complaining voice, to her moody, silent uncle Morelli, as a violent jolt of the carriage, on a rugged mountain path, nearly shook the travellers to pieces. “I cannot much longer endure this fatigue,” continued the gentle girl, almost weeping. “To be suddenly awakened in the middle of the night, and be forced, at a moment’s warning, to quit Paris, and hurry

through France and Germany, as if we were criminals escaping from justice, is a thing which cannot be calmly endured. My whole frame suffers. Is it not possible to rest, were it but for a couple of hours, in some peasant's cottage?"

The howling of the storm, which raged fearfully in the mountains of the Black Forest, and the torrents of rain which descended from the Heavens, and lashed against the carriage, nearly drowned the complaints of the maiden. As to Morelli, he heard not one word of Adeline's speech; for in spite of the tempest, he let down the window on his side of the carriage, and leaning half out of it, watched other sounds which broke upon his ear, but which, however, were too distant and too confused, even for the most attentive listener to distinguish their cause.

"It is nothing. I have been deceived," said the gloomy old man half aloud, as he again drew up the window. Then turning to his trembling niece, whose complaining voice he had heard, though he did not give himself the trouble to listen to one word she had uttered, said, in a cutting and severe tone—"What dost thou complain of?—If you had any feeling for the fate of your nearest living relation, who supplies a father's place

to you, you would willingly bear every hardship, every fatigue, to which even he, at his advanced age, is forced to expose himself. But to thy heart thy mother's brother is a stranger : it grieves only at its separation from that silly fool Reinhold, from whom you have suddenly vanished, without his knowing where or wherefore—The block-head," muttered Morelli to himself, with an ironical smile, " might have plucked the fruit, if he had had courage sufficient to throw the restraints of honour from him. Now I have what I wish, and he goes empty away. This is the consequence of a childish respect for the opinion of the world."

" You err, uncle, if you imagine that the remembrance of Reinhold is the cause of my complaints," replied Adeline, to whom the last words of Morelli were wholly unintelligible. " What I at this moment complain of is real bodily suffering. How can you expect that I should feel anxious on account of a danger which threatens you, of which I know nothing—and the nature of which I cannot even divine ? What do you apprehend ? What is the danger which demands the sacrifice of your health and comfort ? We live a peaceful retired life, we offend no one, and never interfere with political affairs."

“ Silence !” exclaimed the old man, in so loud and vehement a tone, that Adeline started.

However severely Morelli treated the maiden, yet a passionate mode of speaking was not his usual manner towards her. It was more his custom, when he thought he had reason to load her with reproaches, to do it in a suppressed, slow, disagreeable sort of sarcastic tone. So that, from his present unusual heat, Adeline knew that something extraordinary must have greatly disturbed him.

“ What knowest thou ?” continued he more calmly. “ Dost thou think thy uncle so pusillanimous, that for a slight danger, he would choose the night-time for flight, and hurry through the almost impassable mountains of the Black Forest, without even allowing himself breathing time ? No, no, child, ’tis no slight danger that makes Morelli tremble. I bear a treasure about me, above all earthly price, for on it hangs the fate of thousands. Life and death, joy and despair. Ha—ha—ha ! How has the insignificant Morelli overreached the ablest diplomatist in the world ! But, child, here is the rub. This said great man has sent his spies to watch me, and should they get me in their power, a few ounces of lead will only make

my skull a little heavier; or perhaps, as a very great favour, I may obtain a gratuitous employment during life in the galleys; but in either case, thou, my Linchen, hast had the most charming uncle in the world."

Adeline shuddered at these words. Morelli uttered the last part of his speech with a certain grinning simper, which was even more hateful to her than his usual harsh behaviour.

"So we are now in the Black Forest," she said, after a pause, to herself, while she drew her silk cloak closer around her frozen limbs. "I am at ease now. Here is Reinhold's home—here he spent his childhood—his footsteps have perhaps trod these very paths through which I now travel. How often has he talked to me of these heaven-reaching mountains,—how vividly he depicted these rocky valleys,—the rushing waters, and the steep winding paths of these wooded hills! Oh, blessed chance, which leads us to his parental home! His mother still lives, whom he reveres and loves with his whole soul; and his brother, too, who, even when a boy, was a wild and bold hunter. How can I behold these beloved objects with delight, if I dare not speak of him who is dearer to me than all?"

At this moment a violent jolt of the carriage broke the thread of Adeline's reflections, and the vehicle suddenly rolled to the side of a yawning precipice, so that the travellers could with difficulty retain their seats. The curses of the coachman sounded through the storm of the night, and it was only after great exertions that he at length got his drenched horses to stand. Their apprehensions of any serious accident were now removed, but a new obstacle to their journey arose—the coachman declared it was impossible to proceed, as he had long lost the right way, and that in such a night, and among such mountains, he could not hope to regain it; and besides all this, he averred they were surrounded by a thousand yawning gulfs, which threatened their destruction; he therefore insisted on taking the horses from the carriage, and waiting there until break of day.

“Not so, fellow,” replied Morelli, in a tone which Adeline knew indicated his internal rage; “you must travel during the whole of the night. Such were the terms of my agreement; and if it pleases me to break neck and bones in your thousand yawning gulfs, presume not to breathe a word against it; we shall at least break them in com-

pany. Forward, and not another word. I engaged you to drive, and not to argue with me."

Surprised at this bold speech, for a few moments the man was silent, but he soon began anew: "The gulfs and abysses are not what frighten me just now; for even in a case of need, I could find my way in the darkness, and my horses are steady; but, sir, a much greater evil threatens us if we continue our journey. We are, as I know well, approaching the neighbourhood of the noted lake of the Mummelsee, where the water-nymphs play their pranks, particularly in such dark and stormy nights; and woe be to him who disturbs them in their secret pleasures! The most holy life cannot protect him, for these sprites have power to destroy the body, but luckily they must resign the soul to its guardian angel. Let us take warning and remain where we are."

"Superstitious idiot!" exclaimed Morelli, at the same time ordering him instantly to proceed.

During a moment's pause of the storm, a confused sound of voices, and the clang of armed men, reached Morelli's ear.—"Satan is at my heels!" exclaimed the furious old man, and pulling out a loaded pistol, he continued in a voice of thunder; "On, scoundrel! and put your horses to

their utmost speed, or I shall send a bullet through your heart."

"For God's sake," cried the agitated Adeline, seizing his arm, "what can be the cause of your terror?"

"Distract me not!" he replied, while he rudely repulsed her. "Here must be no delay; swift and determined resolution alone can save us."

The threats of Morelli completely overcame the coachman's fear of the water sprites, and he had just flourished his whip, to put his horses into a hard trot, when suddenly a glimmering light broke upon them from both sides of the wooded path, and a rough voice greeted the travellers with a "*Qui vive?*"

"I am lost," groaned Morelli, dashing down the pistol; and hastily taking a large pocketbook from his bosom, with a convulsive gesture, he threw it with all his force from the carriage window into the neighbouring bushes. "Away, thou cause of so much care and disquiet," he muttered with a smile—"Away, 'tis fortunate for me that I have extracted thy kernel—that at least no man can take from me."

"But, uncle, I cannot comprehend—" faltered Adeline.

“ Silence,” interrupted he. “ Now let them come !—The bird is flown—the nest is empty.”

Meanwhile those who had stopped the travellers on their journey now drew near. Several of them carried small lanterns, whose dim flame threw a pale light upon the surrounding woods, as well as upon their own figures. Morelli and Adeline knew not that they had a troop of French soldiers before them ; who, enveloped in their large military cloaks, instantly surrounded the carriage, and seized the horses’ reins.

Adeline’s fear of robbers, which the first tumult had given rise to, now quickly vanished, and she became more tranquil and composed. Even Morelli had smoothed his countenance to an expression of placidity, and he looked at the surrounding soldiers with a smiling aspect. But this did not deceive Adeline ; she knew her uncle well enough to discover, that, under his present mask of calmness and equanimity, the storm of disquiet and passion raged in his inmost soul. After a few moments of suspense, a French officer stepped from among the troop, which still preserved an extraordinary silence, and violently pushing open the door of the carriage, with the assistance of a lamp which he carried in his hand, he narrowly exami-

ned first Adeline, and then her uncle. The gold ornamented hat, and the long military feather, which the wind swung to and fro, showed him to be an officer of high rank. His countenance was youthful, and he possessed a noble deportment. Yet strong passions, or perhaps acute sufferings, had left deep traces behind them. Adeline could not deny that the stranger was indeed a very interesting man, and a slight resemblance in the feature of the mouth, reminded her of her dear Reinhold. Still the furrows in the brow, and the wild and dissipated character of the whole countenance, created a feeling of dislike, which the bold and libertine expression of the stranger's glowing eyes did not tend to diminish. Having finished his scrutiny of Adeline, he again turned his inquiring looks towards Morelli, as if waiting for him to break the silence which still reigned. At length he said, in a rough, deep-toned voice: "It is rather unusual in this remote forest, and at this late hour of the night, to meet travellers. I have been posted here for many months, and never till now have met with any strangers. What accident has brought you here in such a night of storm as this?"

Adeline was surprised to hear these words from

the mouth of a French officer, in fluent German, which, however, was not entirely free from a provincial accent. Morelli replied, with a pleasant smile, to this question, that business of the utmost importance had forced him to travel during the night; that, through the coachman's ignorance of the roads, they had lost their way, and wandered in the forest. "I shall feel much obliged," he continued, "if you will allow one of your people to put us on the right road, and I shall willingly remunerate him."

During this speech, the officer gazed on Adeline with looks of such ardent admiration, that she modestly threw down her eyes, while her heart began to beat violently.

He now turned from her to Morelli, and with a dark frown and knit eye-brows, said, in a stern and serious tone, "Your passport, mein Herr. I have strict injunctions to stop all suspicious travellers, and your midnight journey in this remote forest certainly brings you under that denomination."

On hearing this speech, the countenance of Morelli betrayed some emotion, and in silence he presented his passport to the officer.

"Mechanic Morelli!" he exclaimed, as he

thoughtfully put his hand to his forehead, and slowly perused the unfolded paper. "How is this? If I am not mistaken, I yesterday received orders, that if a very dangerous man of this name came in my way, I was instantly to secure him, and give information of it."

"There must be some error here," said Morelli eagerly.

"Silence, sir," replied the officer coldly. "It would be no great wonder if I did sometimes err, I have so much of this sort of business in hand. But in this case it is impossible to go wrong. It will therefore be necessary to conduct you to my station; and the moment I return from transacting some urgent business which now calls me away, the matter shall be inquired into."

At these words Morelli changed countenance, and convulsively pressed Adeline's hand.

"For God's sake," cried the maiden, "what is the meaning of all this? what will become of us!"

"Be not afraid, my pretty child," said the officer, softening the rough tones of his voice as much as possible; "I hope that everything will be satisfactorily explained, and that I shall hear from that lovely mouth, that you forgive this short interruption of your journey."

“You will surely also——” said Morelli, addressing the officer, who, however, did not reply, but stepped aside and spoke to the soldiers; two of whom, armed with sabres, seated themselves in the carriage opposite the travellers, while a third placed himself on the box beside the coachman. The stranger, having bowed with cold politeness, departed, and the soldier, who had previously received his instructions, having taken the management of the reins, they again proceeded on their journey.

CHAPTER II.

Gaze round thee, stranger, 'tis a hallow'd spot,
To Love and Beauty hallow'd ; the old woods
A sacred gloom breathe forth ; and like the ribs
Of cloistral roof, the beechen boughs above
Their glossy leaves commingle, the gay sun
Of summer keeping out, and through the noon
Yielding a cool retreat and shadowy haunt.

British Eclogues.

THE storm had now passed over, the rain had ceased, and a few stars twinkled in the heavens ; the tempest no longer howled through the forest, and in the distance were distinctly heard the harmonious bells of the flocks. But no ray of peace penetrated Adeline's anxious breast ; and the tempest which raged in Morelli's bosom was only equalled by the storm which had so lately raved around them. The fear of a discovery of his secret machinations, and the probability of his suffering the disgraceful death of a malefactor, stood with soul-harrowing vividness before him.

The tempest of the night was followed by a serene and beautiful morning. Already had the sun darted his friendly rays through the tops of the tall firs down upon the plain below, at the extremity of which stood Frau Martha's solitary dwelling. At this moment, Else, Frau Martha's orphan niece, issued with a light step from the door of the house, and proceeded to the trough, into which she emptied her pitchers, which were filled with new milk. The roses of health glowed on the cheeks of the maiden; her dark eyes sparkled like diamonds from under her coal-black eyebrows; and the loose folds of her dress imparted a singular grace to her slender and youthful form. "Holy Saint Anthony!" she exclaimed in admiration, as her eyes fell upon the grotesque and gigantic figures which the ascending mists formed around the summit of the opposite mountain. "Only see how respectfully the Katzenkopf takes off his cap of clouds to salute the young morning sun. And see how its warm beams dispel the fogs from the Mummel lake. That betokens fine weather after the storm of the night, which gave me no small alarm."

After Else had carefully filled the trough with the foaming milk, she stepped to the fountain and

bathed her lovely face in the sparkling waters of the mountain stream. She then returned to the house, and seating herself at a little corner window, looked thoughtfully out upon the valley; her view of which was partly obstructed by the projecting and sloping roof of the dwelling.

“The night is past, and still Ehrenfried has not returned,” she said in a low voice to herself. “What can be this mysterious business, which occupies him during those hours which ought to be dedicated to repose?—Who can those wild companions be who steal here in the twilight, and after being shut up for hours together, all go off, and return not for many nights and days?—Ah, he knows not the grief this gives the good aunt and me, else he would forbear. Can Frau Martha be as ignorant of her son’s transactions as I am?—I cannot believe it. She must certainly have her conjectures, though she does not say so, but shuts up her grief in her own heart.”

All was now alive in the farm-yard, and from the inside of the house a woman’s voice was heard—“Else, my child! where art thou? Dost thou not hear a strange noise, like the trampling of horses, and the rolling of a carriage?”

The train of her reflections being thus interrupt-

ed, the maiden, at the first call of her aunt, hastened to the door of the house, to learn the purport of her speech, part of which only she had heard; and having done so, she remained attentively listening to the approaching sounds. "Truly, aunt," she replied, after a few moments, "it does appear like the tramp of horses and the rolling of a carriage down the steep hill of Rosenstein. That is an unusual sound in our valley. Now they have rounded the cliff; they are almost upon us. Oh, Heaven! Soldiers are with them; and a nobleman's carriage is driving straight up to the house."

With these words the terrified Else fled into the house, and fastened the strong wooden bolt of the door.

Whilst the maiden was thus employed, Frau Martha, with her slight figure and pale countenance, stepped from the adjoining apartment, saying, "Ah, Else! what dost thou? They are probably travellers who have lost their way; and from Martha's house shall no wanderers be inhospitably turned away."

"But the soldiers—they are French!" replied the maiden, with a shudder.

"So much the better," rejoined the old woman; "they come with no evil intention. Their Empe-

ror is an ally of our Prince, therefore we have nothing to fear from them ; so open the door, and deny no one admittance.”

Else had no sooner obeyed the command of her aunt, and removed the bar of wood from the door, than she took to flight, and sheltered herself in a small inner apartment belonging to Frau Martha, who calmly remained standing at the door, to see how this matter would terminate, and await the arrival of the travellers.

Meanwhile the carriage rolled down the mountain path into the valley, and stopped before Martha's door. A man in a military dress sprung out of it, and with quick steps entered the house. As he approached the widow, a dark cloud overspread her countenance, and she knit her pale brows together. “What is the meaning of this disguise, Thomas?” she said, as he approached. “You cannot deceive me ; for even under these garments I know you for the wicked accomplice of my deluded son, whom, under the secrecy of night, you seduce to actions which will prove his ruin. Why are you not rather in the *Gottesgrube*,* among the honest miners ? or have you renounced that busi-

* A mine in the Black Forest, near the village *Wittichen*.

ness, and come above ground to abuse the goodness of the Lord in pursuing this criminal mode of life?"

"You seem inclined to jest and make game of me this morning," he replied, with a sneering laugh. "But what I am now after is of more value than anything I can find in the mines; and secretly acquired treasure gives just as much satisfaction as any other. The principal thing is to have it. But, joking apart, I come with an important message from your son Ehrenfried. He greets you by me."

"Speak, then, thou enemy to all peace!" interrupted Frau Martha.

"Well, then," said Thomas, "he desires that the two travellers now in the carriage, an old gentleman and his niece, be concealed here until his return. His safety, nay, even his life, depends upon their detention; and upon no account must they learn by whom they were made prisoners. My comrades and myself shall take care that none of them shall escape; but over you and your people we have no command. You must take the bridle in your own hands."

"What!" exclaimed she, angrily, "do you think that I shall take any part in such a suspicious enterprise? What right have you to detain the

old man and the maiden here against their will? You must instantly tell me the whole truth, or my doors shall be shut against you and your companions."

"Do as you please," surlily growled Thomas; "but if by your means Ehrenfried should ornament a gibbet, or perhaps fall under the axe of the unpolite guillotine, you must answer for it, and not I."

"What sayest thou?" whispered Frau Martha, while a violent trembling seized her, which forced her to take hold of the wooden banister. "Surely such a fate cannot overtake him?"

"Such a fate will certainly overtake him," replied the *ci-devant* miner, with decision, "if you deny him this favour. 'Tis all one to me. I shall soon provide for my own safety; and for the rest, I wash my hands of it."

"Dear aunt, how can you hesitate?" said Else, in an imploring voice, as she issued from her concealment behind the door, where she had overheard all. "I hear this concerns the life of Ehrenfried; and surely the saints themselves do not ask of us more than our duty. They must be very wicked men from whom our Ehrenfried has anything to fear."

“ Right, Jungfer Else,” said Thomas, with a hoarse laugh ; “ I knew well you would not leave Ehrenfried in the mire.”

The maiden blushed deeply, while Frau Martha said, with a sigh, “ Be it so. A mother’s heart is a weak thing. But what can be dearer than the life of a child ? Take the strangers up to Ehrenfried’s room ; nothing shall harm them while under my roof. May God so grant me a peaceful and blessed death-bed !”

Thomas now hastened back to the carriage, the step of which he let down. Adeline and her uncle, who, from anxiety and apprehension, had passed a most uncomfortable night, the *désagrémens* of which the presence of their armed companions did not tend to diminish, now alighted, followed by the soldier, who, along with Thomas, had occupied the carriage.

Adeline attentively examined the dwelling before which she now stood ; the singular construction of which excited her curiosity. The building was low, but extensive. Under the projecting roof there ran a wooden gallery of rugged trunks of trees, artfully grooved into each other, and which appeared to be the receptacle for all kinds of household lumber. Everything seemed kept in

the nicest order; and the house, with its little wing, had so neat an appearance, that the maiden could scarcely turn her eyes away from it.

But this scene had no attractions for Morelli; he measured Thomas with scrutinizing and gloomy looks, who now for the first time broke the silence which he and his companions had hitherto observed; and who fluently, in the dialect of the Black Forest, invited the travellers to enter the house, where rest and refreshment awaited them.

Morelli did not deign a reply to this invitation; but, after a short pause, during which he closely examined both his guards, turning to Thomas, he said, with a scornful smile, "Indeed! are you then one of those heroes of the great army who fought in Russia? and did your buttons lose their eagles there, so that they now resemble nothing in the world but defaced copper pennies?—And I perceive also that the frost has so crumpled the cloth of your uniform, that one would take it for nothing but dingy linen. Your sabres, too, seem to have dwindled into woodman's knives, and your muskets into pocket-pistols—Am I right, friend? Do you belong to these heroes?"

Thomas replied to this speech with a loud laugh; then said, with the most undaunted impudence,

“ Have you discovered at last, then, that we are neither Frenchmen nor soldiers? Truly, clear daylight is not the time to look at us ; for the fox in the wolf’s skin is not then to be mistaken. But, mein Herr, in the night, the thing may pass well enough, as you know by experience ; then, the linen uniform, with the copper penny upon it, the woodman’s knife, and the small fowling-piece, have assisted to accomplish a scheme which may enrich us all the rest of our lives. However, let us waste no more time in useless talk. Come with me to your apartment, where your niece can make up for the rest she lost last night.”

“ I stir not from this spot till I know who you are, and by what right you detain me here,” said Morelli, in a determined tone. “ I shall waste no more words upon you. If my arms had not been taken from me, I would have treated you as daring vagabonds, who, without law or justice, take upon yourselves, at your own will and pleasure, to stop travellers on their way. But enough—Instantly allow me to continue my journey, or I shall give information to the next magistrate, and bring such a storm upon your head, as shall make you tremble.”

“ Old gentleman, you seem in an abusive mood ;

but that does not in the least disturb me," replied Thomas, coolly, as he filled his pipe. "Please to reflect that you are at this moment in our power; and that, on a signal from me, twenty armed men would spring forward, one of whom would be sufficient to cool your boiling rage. Make no more resistance, but follow me. I act for another, whose will and pleasure it is, that you remain in quiet submission here till his return, when he himself will dispose of you."

"And who is this other," said the old man, suppressing his rage, as he saw that here his prayers and his threats were alike useless, "whose orders you obey so strictly?"

"Oh, his profession is highly respectable, and his name is a very honourable one," said Thomas, with shouts of laughter, in which he was joined by his companions. "But it is better," continued the miner, "that he himself should tell you his name and his business when he returns. Now, forward without more delay."

Adeline listened with deep anxiety to Morelli's conference with their bold companion; and the dread of having fallen into the hands of robbers, who had now brought her to their retreat, where they carried on their secret crimes, momentarily

increased. At this instant a little corner window of the house was suddenly opened, and there appeared at it the pale but benevolent countenance of an old woman, who said in a serious, but mild tone, "Be not afraid, but step fearlessly into this dwelling. I cannot prevent your being detained here for a short time; but there shall not a hair of your head be injured—Nothing shall harm you while under my roof. May the Lord so give me his help and blessing."

Adeline thought she heard the voice of an angel. In a transport of joy, she raised her agitated looks to the speaker, whose benevolent expression of countenance, even more than her words, soon reassured and composed her.

"No," she said to herself, "in this countenance there is no deceit. On her pale face, I trace the marks of grief, but crime is not there—Yes, I will confide in her words, even though the conduct of her friends contradicts her promises."

Morelli, who had viewed the widow with doubt and distrust, was just about to address her, when the casement was closed, and the speaker vanished. He bit his lips angrily, then seizing the hand of his niece, he led her into the dwelling.

"The old fellow cannot leave off prating," mut-

tered Thomas to himself, while he motioned to his companion to secure the coachman and horses. "I shall take care, however, that he shall hear nothing from me that he can blab." And he quickly followed the travellers into the house.

The chamber into which the forester conducted Adeline and Morelli, the door of which he carefully locked as he withdrew, surprised the maiden by its singular appearance.

Around every part of the dark wainscotted walls fresh green boughs were entwined, between which were placed large white baskets, filled with earth, containing the fragrant rose, the lily, narcissus, and pink, whose graceful heads, waving upon their long stalks, seemed, on the entrance of the traveller, to bend in friendly greeting. A merry host of tame birds carolled amongst the leafy branches; and while some of them chirped and twittered, and looked down with an inquiring eye on the strangers, others wheeled gaily around, and seemed to wish to claim familiar acquaintance with them. Here the voice of the lark pealed forth her song of joy—the thrush raised her shrill cry—the nightingale breathed her sweet complaints—and the cuckoo raised its notes of mockery.

"Cursed screamers!" growled Morelli, as he

gloomily threw himself upon a couch which stood near—"As if the extraordinary events of the past night were not enough to turn one's head, but we must also be deafened by this infernal noise!—Speak, Adeline, what dost thou think of all this?"

"Oh, I am rejoiced," replied Adeline, as she opened the window to view the surrounding country—"quite rejoiced, since I heard the consoling words of the pale old woman, and entered this chamber, where we see only the most charming objects of nature, and where no trace of evil seems to dwell."

"Foolish babble! romantic folly!" said Morelli, while Adeline contemplated with delight the magnificent spectacle which now met her view, as she looked through the wired grating which prevented the feathered songsters from escaping to their sylvan homes.

The swelling hills gently sloped down into the serene and peaceful valleys, which, like a lovely green tapestry, lay before her. Above the spreading vineyards towered the gloomy firs, which were reflected in the limpid water of the little brook, which flowed with a sweet murmuring sound. In the distance, steep mountains and rugged cliffs

reared themselves aloft, and the extensive amphitheatre was completely encircled and shut in by huge masses of projecting rocks, whose dark and gloomy summits were lost in the golden clouds of the dawning morn. Here sounded the harmonious notes of the shepherds' pipe, joyfully greeting the young morning with their melodious tones, as they led their flocks to the margin of the mountain brooks. All spoke of peace and happiness in God's glorious world, which his power created, and his wisdom governs.

Sad and touching feelings now filled the heart of Adeline, to whom the voice of memory brought back many sweet though indistinct remembrances.

"How!" she exclaimed to herself in surprise, "have I then dreamt of this place, and of all that now surrounds me? or perhaps in early childhood I may have visited this spot, and the pleasing fantasy of my early years now stands in powerful reality before me? No, oh, no—now I see it all. It is distinctly reflected in the mirror of my soul. Often has Reinhold told me of a place such as this, and called it his home. Thus stood it depicted to my mind's eye, when he described the rushing brooks, the grazing flocks, and the

green valley, where, when a boy, he played with his bold and dauntless brother. The lovely vineyards, the dark and gloomy mountains, and the rugged cliffs are all before me. Wonderful enchantment! Ah! the apartment, too, which Reinhold and his brother inhabited was ornamented with green boughs and fragrant flowers, and the lively feathered tribe, with their variegated plumage, and their merry notes, raised their songs of joy amidst foliage and bright blossoms. Often would he sit in such a green solitude as this, and grieve that he had no opportunity of acquiring more knowledge than was possessed by the schoolmaster of the neighbouring village. After the death of his father, whom various misfortunes and disappointments had sent to an early grave, and who had awakened the feelings of ambition and a love of learning in the breast of the boy, Reinhold's passionate desire of knowledge could not be restrained, and his good mother sent him to the next town, in order that he might fully indulge his thirst for learning. He had never seen her since that period; but with what devotion did he worship her in absence! And was not Reinhold's mother deserving of this love? Why have I no

mother? I lament the deprivation. My uncle has no kind feelings towards me. I am ill—my pulse beats with fever. How would a mother's presence rejoice me, and chase away every pain and every sorrow! Ha! what thoughts flash like lightning through my soul! If Reinhold's mother—If the pale old woman——”

At this moment the door of the apartment was opened, and Adeline's glowing looks rested upon the anxious countenance of Frau Martha, as, rushing forward, she threw herself at the feet of the astonished widow, exclaiming—“Thou art Reinhold's mother: Oh, be also mine!”

Amazed, and almost terrified, Frau Martha looked at the kneeling maiden. Thomas, who had exchanged his soldier's dress for a peasant's jacket, now made his appearance, and said, “Be not deceived, they are dissemblers; and the old man, as well as the maiden, have both planned the destruction of your son.”

“She raves!” exclaimed Morelli, as he hastily sprung from his bed, and with the assistance of Thomas bore the fainting Adeline to the nearest couch; and having requested the widow to procure some restoratives, he then desired her to leave

the care of his niece, who, he said, required nothing but rest and quiet, to himself. Thomas joined in this request; and, at their urgent entreaties, Frau Martha quitted the apartment, but not without casting upon them looks of suspicion and distrust. The situation of the poor maiden awakened her whole sympathy, for she could not believe her to be the dissembler that Thomas represented. From Adeline's lips a name had fallen dearer to her than the whole world, and to hear which from the mouth of a stranger, appeared to her a most wonderful occurrence. As soon as the widow had sent the necessary restoratives to the apartment of the invalid, she related to her niece the extraordinary interview she had had with the strangers, and how much she participated in the sufferings of Adeline.

“Do not let them deceive you,” said Else, warmly, in great alarm at their designs against her dear Ehrenfried; “if this old man, with his malicious watchful looks, and the maiden with her strange behaviour, have any wicked intentions against Ehrenfried, they would take good care to procure accurate information regarding you and your household. Trust them not. I agree with

Thomas, and think it best that we should follow his counsel.”

Frau Martha shook her head incredulously, although she felt deep anxiety respecting Ehrenfried, whose secret enterprises she knew to be full of danger, even should he escape the arm of the law. She sighed deeply, and then said, “The mischief which now threatens him is the fruit of his own guilt; but the poor sick maiden certainly bears no malice towards any one in her heart. The old man I myself would not trust; but she shall not be the less attended to on that account.”

As often as the widow attempted in the course of the day to gain admittance to the invalid, she was either prevented by Thomas, who kept watch before the apartment, or by Morelli himself, with the excuse that Adeline slept, and that as her illness was entirely occasioned by fatigue, quietness and rest were the best medicine; and therefore he would not allow her to be disturbed. With this answer she was forced to be content, and afraid of increasing the indisposition of the invalid, she desisted from her importunities to be admitted to her chamber. But the name which had escaped from the lips of the stranger continually rung in her

ears, and she found it impossible to throw off the disquiet which from that moment had settled on her soul.

CHAPTER III.

Geo. How's this ?

Rich. Drawn swords—that's all.

KÖRNER.

TOWARDS the evening of the same day, an unusual crowd from Kehl and Strasburg assembled upon the Bridge of the Rhine. Knights, soldiers, citizens, and persons of all ranks and denominations, thronged the extensive bridge, under which the majestic river rolled its foaming waves. This moving multitude appeared to be attracted to the same spot by some object of curiosity. All rushed to the German side of the bridge, where they remained assembled, and turned their anxious looks in the direction of Kehl, to watch the appearance of the long expected funeral procession of the French Field-Marechal, who had fallen in one of

the late battles, and whose body they were now carrying to France for interment in the family burying-ground.

But when the good citizens of Strasburg, who had come out to meet the body of their late Field-Marechal, saw the domes of their gigantic Minsters sparkling in the golden rays of the setting sun, they thought it most prudent instantly to return home, lest, peradventure, they should find the gates of the fortress shut against them, and so be forced to seek a lodging by starlight without the walls.

Twilight now gradually approached, and spread her dark mantle over the foaming waves and the peaceful land, and still no procession appeared.

All was now quiet on the bridge—a few solitary loiterers alone remained, who had not yet lost hope of the appearance of the procession, and who had determined to show their respect to the deceased, by accompanying him part of the way to his last earthly home. The guard of honour, which, by order of the Commander, was stationed on the German side of the bridge, tired with the wearisome delay of the procession, laid aside their arms and assembled round the grey-bearded drummer,

who had made a campaign in Egypt, and who, seated on a muffled drum, was relating wonderful things of the secrets of the Pyramids. The approach to the bridge, and the bridge itself, was illuminated on both sides by torches of pitch, whose lurid and flickering flames were reflected in the agitated waves which rolled beneath.

“As I was telling you,” continued the talkative drummer, “there are at least a thousand casks filled with gold Napoleons concealed in the catacombs of the Pyramids, just where the old Egyptian kings buried them, and which would be a glorious prize to him who is bold enough to search for them.”

This speech was suddenly interrupted by a call of the sentinels, and the clash of arms, which announced the approach of the procession with the body of the Field-Marechal. The command was given; in a moment the guard stood under arms; and the hollow sound of the veteran's drum now rolled as incessantly as his tongue had done a short time before in recounting his often-repeated adventures. The funeral procession, which was now so near as to be distinctly seen by the light of the torches, did not advance at that slow and

dignified pace which the solemnity of the occasion demanded ; but to the astonishment of the spectators, approached with extraordinary rapidity. An officer rode before, who, with his hat pulled over his face, galloped up to the captain of the guard, and after a few words, presented his passport, the tenor of which was, that he, Adjutant Delolay, was ordered to accompany the body of the deceased Marechal to his family burying-ground, and to pay him the last military honours. After this conference, on a sign from the officer on guard, the drums were silenced, and without even waiting for the salute of honour, the procession hurried forward.

“ This is not the way to treat a French Marechal, at least if they mean to pay him military honours,” muttered the old drummer to his comrade ; “ it would break the hero’s heart were he to see what pains they take to get the business over as quickly as possible ! *Sacre nom de Dieu*—I knew him well ; I have beat my drum by his side at Austerlitz and Eylau.”

“ It may be so,” interrupted his companion ; “ but he must have been of a most enormous corpulence, it is no wonder that the first cannon ball found it easy to hit him—only look at the size of

the bier, and how high the body seems to rise under the black pall. On my soul, one would think there were six Field-Marechals there in place of one.”

At this moment the leader of the procession dashed past at full gallop—the long plume of his hat waved gracefully in the light of the torches, a scornful smile passed over his countenance, and his expression of triumph and delight spoke of some enterprise successfully accomplished. He soon reached the soldiers, who, with their arms reversed, and in solemn silence, hastily followed the body. The procession had scarcely gained the middle of the bridge, when, to the amazement of the spectators, the officer, who now seemed in greater haste than ever, gave the horses a smart blow with the but-end of a carabine, which instantly set them off at a hard trot, while he himself followed at a rapid pace, that he might not let the precious corpse out of his sight. So soon as the procession and its leader had passed, the guard of honour at the entrance of the bridge dispersed, to make way for the douaniers, who generally were stationed there, but whose place, upon this particular occasion, was supplied by soldiers of the line.

Suddenly the clash of arms was again heard, and a rushing sound as of approaching horsemen. The challenge of the sentinel was replied to in a loud, impatient, and eager voice; and an officer, whose richly embroidered uniform was covered with orders, rode up with the speed of lightning on a black charger, followed by two gendarmes.

“What is that?” said the stranger, in a haughty and commanding tone to the officer on guard, “what is that dark moving mass upon the bridge?”

The officer, drawing near, informed the inquirer that it was the body of the late Field-Marechal who was killed in the last battle, and which, under the command of the Adjutant Delolay, they were conducting to be interred in the burying-ground of the deceased.

“The devil!” said the officer, unsheathing his sword, “this is some infamous deception—the procession follows me—I am the Adjutant Delolay!” And with these words he struck his spurs deep in his horse’s sides, and flew, followed by his attendants, after the procession.

The douaniers at once perceived the cheat that had been practised upon them, and that by this contrivance a rich booty had escaped their harpy-claws.

“ This is a trick of the smugglers,” they exclaimed, as they rushed upon the bridge after the gendarmes.

“ *Sacre nom !*” exclaimed the veteran of Egypt “ did I not tell you that they knew not how to show funeral honours to a Marechal of the great army? Now, you see I am right, they are no soldiers, but rogues ; and the pretended Marechal turns out to be neither more nor less than a bale of tobacco.”

All laughed, but the officer commanded silence, as he did not think it consistent with his dignity to take part in the concerns of the douaniers ; however, he thought it as well, under the present circumstances, to remain at his post, and there await the termination of the affair. Whilst this took place on the bank, the procession on the bridge continued its way as quickly as possible, but it was still a considerable distance from the opposite side, when the hollow echoing gallop of approaching horsemen, and the shouts of the enraged douaniers, reached the ear of its conductor.

“ Confound it !” said he to himself, with suppressed rage, “ to be so near the harbour, and yet be shipwrecked.”

He now endeavoured to beat the horses into a

trot ; but all his exertions to force them to accelerate their speed proved fruitless. The officer now approached at full gallop, followed by the gendarmes, and a crowd of furious douaniers ; and the leader of the mock procession now saw that his well-concerted enterprise had failed, and that it was time for him to think of his own safety.

“ All is lost !” he exclaimed to his companions ; “ but the blood-hounds shall not be benefited by it, and their noses shall in vain try to discover the scent. Cut the traces,” he exclaimed, “ and throw the carriage, with all its contents, into the stream ; and,” he continued, with a scornful laugh, “ let the fishes feast on the corpulent body of his Excellency the Field-Marechal.”

The good people who followed the spectacle along the banks of the river, were lost in amazement at this extraordinary order, which was instantly obeyed. The horses, freed from their traces, rushed at full speed to the opposite bank. Every exertion was made to push the heavily laden carriage to the edge of the bridge, in order to throw it over into the river, but the pursuers were already on the spot, the gendarmes, at full gallop, dispersed the people who were busied about the carriage ; the douaniers stormed and threat-

ened, while, from the other side of the bridge, to which the pursued had escaped, there issued a hollow murmur.

“ Is it even so ? ” muttered the captain of the smugglers, as he raised himself in the saddle, and beheld the dangerous situation in which he was placed. “ And so the valuable goods will fall into the hands of the rascals after all ! Nothing now remains but to give my friends the signal to the rescue. Cursed disaster ! devilish accident ! which has overturned so deep-laid a plan.”

At the same moment there was heard a peculiar whistle, which the douaniers immediately knew to be the smuggler’s usual signal when forced to retreat, and which gave notice to his people that their assistance was required to rescue him from some imminent danger.

With the speed of lightning he instantly threw off his military hat and cloak, by which he might be recognised ; and in the dress of a citizen, which he wore under his uniform, he dashed at full gallop among the astonished crowd, to gain a certain point of the bridge, where several boats lay unobserved, and where he knew he would instantly find a refuge. But while he was straining every nerve to reach his destination, the officer in the

embroidered uniform sprung upon him, and stopped him in the way.

“ Are you the scoundrel,” he exclaimed, with irrepressible fury, “ who presumes to pass himself off for the Adjutant Delolay ? Instantly dismount, kneel in the dust ; tremble, miserable cheat—I myself am Delolay !”

At these opprobrious epithets, the stormy blush of passion glowed on the countenance of him who now played the part of captain of the smugglers. In his hand glanced the polished steel, which he held aloft, prepared equally for attack or defence. “ It is you who are the scoundrel !” he replied, with furious rage, to the Adjutant ; “ the slave of a tyrant, and the miserable instrument of injustice ! Dost thou think that I would venture my life for a couple of wretched dollars ?—No—to the cause of freedom alone I devote my services, and shall meet oppression with cunning or with force.”

Delolay foamed with rage. For some time words were denied him, and with much difficulty he at length broke forth, “ Contemptible worm ! Dost thou dare to blaspheme my Emperor ?” He raised his sword, and aimed a furious blow at the breast of his antagonist, which the latter parried with great dexterity.

“ Have it, then !” cried the smuggler, who, burning to revenge the insult he had received, forgot all thoughts of his own safety, and brandishing his weapon in the air, it fell with a violent stroke upon the head of the officer, whose hat, cleft in two, rolled on the ground, and scarcely able to retain his seat, he reeled in the saddle.

“ Ehrenfried !—Brother !—For God’s sake, what are you about ?” cried a well-known voice to the smuggler.

With a countenance pale as death, the latter looked at the traveller, who at that moment sprung from a post-chariot, whose progress had been arrested by the crowd. “ Ah ! what has brought you here at this unlucky moment ?” he replied with bitterness. “ Begone ! I will not acknowledge thee—and who ever recognises me here, betrays me.”

But several of the approaching douaniers had already heard the speech of the traveller. They had seen the well-known bold and cunning smuggler leave his people, and now thought to make him an easy capture. Many shots were discharged at him, and the bullets whizzed around his head. The smuggler now saw, that only a few moments for escape remained, and that a disgraceful punish-

ment, or perhaps a shameful death, would follow the least delay.

With a powerful jerk he wheeled round, and striking his spurs into his horse's sides, with one spring he plunged from the edge of the bridge into the foaming waves.

“He is lost!” exclaimed the traveller, as he pressed towards the place from which the smuggler had leapt so undauntedly.

Another shower of bullets was sent after him, but all missed their aim; and, to their great disappointment, the douaniers saw their enemy reach unhurt the boat in which his companions awaited him, and into which he threw himself, leaving his horse, that, till now, had carried him, to the mercy of the waves. The curses and abuse of his pursuers resounded on all sides; but this was only answered by a shout of triumph from the smugglers.

The escape of the captain of the smugglers removed a weight from the breast of the traveller, and he breathed more freely. He now turned to the Adjutant Delolay, who, stunned by the blows he had received, had fallen from his horse, and lay insensible upon the ground. His face was covered with blood, and there were several deep wounds on his head.

Seeing the situation of the officer, the traveller hastened to the carriage to procure some restoratives, when his progress was suddenly stopped by one of the gendarmes, who arrested him on the suspicion of his being in league with the smugglers. In vain he showed his passport, which represented him as in the service of the Secretary of the French Ambassador, upon whose affairs he now travelled ; and assured him, that his commission was of the utmost importance, and would brook no delay. The gendarme declared, that these considerations were nothing to him ; and that he must obey the orders he had received. The traveller now saw himself placed under the disagreeable necessity of again ascending the carriage, in which the still insensible Delolay was also placed, and under the escort of several of the gendarmes, they returned to Strasburg.

Whilst the traveller was reflecting upon the manifold accidents which had so unexpectedly overturned all his plans, the douaniers, who had found in the pretended hearse, a most enormous booty, were busily employed in carrying the valuable goods to a place of safety, and this lucrative prize amply consoled them for the escape of the smuggler. As they approached the guard on the bridge,

the grey-bearded drummer said, with a smile, " Good, my boys, this is the first Marechal that has fallen into your hands ; hold him fast, and do not give him his freedom on parole ; for a hero who is sold by measure and weight, cannot know much of the laws of war and honour."

CHAPTER IV.

The sound of the gentle rills, that tinkle
 Adown their pebbly beds ;
 The aspect of the stars that twinkle,
 The azure gloom that spreads,
 Soften the troubled heart, and soothe
 The waves of the spirit, till all is smooth.

Moods of the Mind.

Jaromir. What do I hear ?

My Bertha's looks are turn'd on me again ;
 Her voice recalls me, and on golden wings
 Brings back my life.

GRILLPARZER.

It was midnight when Adeline awoke from a deep and refreshing slumber. With surprise she looked at the dim-burning night-lamp, which shed a languid light through the apartment, and it was some time before she could remember the cause of her being there. Her uncle lay extended upon a chair, on which he had thrown himself from mere exhaustion ; and his deep breathing testified that he too had felt the effects of their fatiguing journey. His slumbers, however, were disturb-

ed, and some terrific dream appeared to disquiet him ; for hollow, unintelligible sounds, from time to time, issued from his lips. His sharp features were painfully distorted, and the deep wrinkles of his ghastly countenance imparted to him a look of horror, at which Adeline inwardly trembled. She could not love one who evinced towards her nothing but cold repulsiveness or bitter scorn, and who acknowledged no law save that of his own will, and invariably punished those who were bold enough to dispute his sway. But although Adeline could not love him, gratitude bound her to him, for having, when an orphan, rescued her from poverty and wretchedness. As she gazed on him with looks of sympathy, she said to herself, “ What mighty power has sleep, which through the fantasy of a dream can shake and agitate that hardened heart, and pierce that breast, which never yet was touched with one feeling of tenderness or pity ! True, he is my uncle, and the only relative whom death has left me ; but to me he will always be a stranger. He compels me like a slave to follow his unsettled and wandering life, and I must obey his will, even against the dearest wishes and feelings of my heart.”

A heavy sigh relieved her, and her eyes filled

with tears. She was still lost in deep reflection, when a noise under the window of her apartment broke the current of her thoughts, and the suppressed voice of a man repeatedly called the name of Thomas ; but as no answer followed, he at last added, “ Have you all lost your hearing, ye dormice ? And will you dream on till the constable comes to waken you with a vengeance, and walk you all off to the House of Correction ? ”

Adeline listened attentively. A noise was heard at the door of the apartment, and in the next moment she saw the figure of a man steal from the house. This increased her anxiety ; and all the horrors of her situation rushed upon her. “ Is it possible,” she said to herself, “ that we have fallen into the hands of robbers ? Among wretches, who, afraid of the discovery of their crimes, have determined on our death ? ” Adeline hesitated what steps to pursue in this fearful crisis. To awaken her uncle would be useless, for what defence could a weak old man, and unarmed too, oppose to their assailants ? She stepped softly to the window, which she cautiously opened ; and at the same moment she heard another casement near her unclosed, from which the man who had brought them

there in the morning looked out, and said, in a smothered tone, "Devil roast you! What do you make such a noise about? Do you wish to frighten the game that I watch here for that mad rogue Fred? Speak softly, and say what is the matter. Have they brought everything safe into the French nest? Does the fire-signal from the hills confirm the good news?"

"No, no," replied the voice from without—"all must have failed, for there is no fire-signal far or near. I have just come from the hills; and unless my eyes deceive me, there is not a light to be seen round the whole neighbourhood. Everything is dark on the heights; and no sky-rockets were let off in the valley, which would have been the case if that rogue's plot had succeeded. Depend upon it, all is discovered, and they themselves tightly peppered. Take care that the constable is not here before evening, to march the whole nest off to prison. As for me, I shall save myself in time, and shall descend fifty fathom deep into the *Gottesgrube*, where no Christian soul shall get sight of me; and I advise you to follow my example."

"Then I should be a fool," replied the other.

“ I suppose you have been dipping too deep in the brandy bottle, and on that account cannot see what is close before your nose. It is rather too much to expect that I should give credit to the words of a rascal like you, who sits the whole day over his brandy-flask, and believe that the well-laid plot of that rogue is unsuccessful. I won't so easily relinquish my share of the booty ; and I shall, therefore, remain here until the moon shows itself over the tops of the Forest. It will then be time enough to take refuge in the thickets, where I shall just be as safe as you in the bottom of the *Gottesgrube*.”

“ Do as you please,” called the other from below ; “ but I have taken my resolution, and shall keep it.”

Here the conference ended. Adeline observed that the last speaker went off, while the other shut down the window. For a few moments she hoped they had nothing to fear ; but again the words which had dropt from her guard filled her with fearful forebodings ; and she anxiously looked for the arrival of the person who appeared to harbour such evil designs against them.

The cold night air began to chill her ; she

gently closed the window, and softly stole to her couch, when she heard Thomas return to his post, and lay himself down before the door of the apartment. With a mind torn with doubt, Adeline listened to every noise. What could be the meaning of all these mysterious circumstances?—At this moment the shrill cry of the cuckoo resounded through the arbour, while at the same time the soft notes of a flute breathed forth its pleasing melody. This sudden and unexpected sound, which appeared to her like a warning voice, threw Adeline into great alarm. A violent giddiness seized her; and to save herself from falling, she caught hold of one of the branches with which the room was ornamented, and the awakened feathered tribe filled the apartment with their shrill screams.

“Are they there?” exclaimed the startled Morelli, as he sprang to his feet, and with a countenance distorted with horror, stood staring at Adeline. “Will they carry me to the sand-hill, that it may drink my blood; and will they seize the corpse of the old Morelli?—Fools, idiots! they must first prove my guilt; and the pocket-book lies securely hidden in the Black Forest, where it never will be found unless Satan himself guides them to it.”

The sweet tones of the flute, which still continued, brought peace and hope to the heart of the maiden, and she now recovered her composure. The old man listened for a while in deep attention to the sound ; but as soon as he recovered himself, and his features had resumed their usual severe and cold expression, turning to Adeline, he said, “ Ah ! you appear to have quite regained your health ; but did it never occur to you when you chose to play the night-wanderer, and in your mad frolic set up these screaming wretches, that it would disturb the rest of your old uncle ? ”

Without returning any reply to the unmerited reproaches which these words conveyed, Adeline informed him of all that had happened. With apparent indifference, the old man listened to her relation, while he paced the chamber. When she had brought her narrative to a close, he again threw himself carelessly upon a seat, while he said, with a cold smile, “ And what can this mighty matter signify ?—That the people are engaged in some secret and suspicious business is certain ; but I cannot think they have any designs against us. Had they harboured any intention to rob us, I scarcely think they would have troubled themselves to bring us here, where so many eyes are

upon them, when they could have completed their business with so much more safety under the veil of night, in the Forest. No, no—the fear of robbery is both needless and laughable. Another design, which I cannot yet unriddle, lies at the bottom of our detention; evil it cannot be, but the delay of our journey is vexatious and provoking. What now comes of the warning of your precious cuckoo, and the silly notes of the flute, which, to my comfort, have ceased at last? You should recollect that you are in the Black Forest, where, in every peasant's hut, particularly at the hour of the cuckoo, you will hear this flute business going on. But enough. Now away and sleep off the remains of your illness. This uncertainty cannot last much longer, and we shall soon again set out on our journey.”

Morelli had no sooner thrown himself on his couch, than he again fell into the unquiet slumber from which Adeline had so lately aroused him. But sleep fled from her eyes, and she numbered every hour until the break of morn, when, as formerly, the cuckoo's call, and the notes of the flute, were again repeated. At length the day dawned, and the young morning sun greeted the anxious maiden with his bright beams: the larks and lin-

nets raised a joyful song; and a female voice was heard singing a cheerful ballad. Adeline knew the song: it brought sweet recollections to her mind, and filled her soul with the most delicious images. Reinhold had often sung it—Reinhold, whose love was the most invaluable treasure of her heart. She hastily approached the window, and saw a blooming maiden drawing water from a well before the house. Adeline opened the window and smiled to her. On turning round at this noise, and perceiving the stranger, Else stopped her song, and with a look full of suspicion and distrust, fled into the house. Adeline sighed, and said to herself, “What strange suspicion can they have of me, which makes me an object of terror and dislike to all around?” She sunk into deep thought, while her eyes rested on the mountains, from whose tops the grey mists of morning were fast departing, leaving disclosed their lofty summits, crowned with gigantic pines, and at whose base lay the extensive meadows, whose fragrant flowers scented the morning air.

The unquiet slumber of Morelli still continued; and scarcely conscious of what she was doing, Adeline remained standing at the window. At this moment the pale old woman stepped from the

house, and raising her pensive eyes to Adeline, she said, "Why do you remain in your dull apartment when the magnificent scene around invites you to walk?—Come with me. A stroll among our hills will refresh both body and mind."

Adeline, surprised, hesitated what to reply, but after a pause, she said, "I dare not—my uncle would be displeased."

"If duty restrains you," rejoined the widow, "I shall not urge you. I thought that perhaps you feared the guard before your door, whose harshness I would soon have softened." And with these words Frau Martha set out on her way to the mountains.

Adeline had no sooner declined this invitation than she repented of it. Again the idea rushed into her thoughts, that perhaps this gentle and sorrowful old woman was the mother of her Reinhold, and that fate had brought her there, and had at last given her a friend to whom she might impart the grief that oppressed her, and whose sweet participation in her sorrow would awaken new trust and consolation in her soul. "Perhaps," said the maiden, "Frau Martha may have been sent to console me in my affliction. Ah! what precious moments I have lost! what an opportunity I have neglected!"

A melancholy foreboding that this opportunity would never return, and that now all was lost, took possession of her. She sought her couch, and hid her tearful countenance in the pillow. When Morelli awoke and found his niece in this situation, far from participating in her grief, he said to himself, "Silly, childish humours!" And although internally tortured by the most dreadful feelings, yet neither by word nor gesture did he betray what was passing within. The dread of death had seized upon his heart, and he had reason to tremble, for he had staked his life upon a desperate game.

Thomas now brought some refreshments into the apartment of the prisoners. In moody silence he stepped to the window, and looked anxiously towards the road over which they had so lately travelled. With a countenance pale from terror he suddenly retreated.

"The devil!" he exclaimed; "so it is no lie! and money and goods are gone, and all is discovered!"

Adeline looked at him with affright, while the astonished Morelli approached the window, which the other at that moment hastily opened.

"Fred, is this you?" said Thomas, to a man who approached wrapped in a coarse great-coat,

and who, in breathless haste, had now reached the house. Morelli knew the man to be the same who had stopped their carriage the previous evening, and who had sent them to their present abode; for, although he formerly wore a rich military uniform, this did not prevent Morelli from recognising his features, which were too deeply impressed upon his memory to be easily forgotten.

“Is everything lost, then?” continued Thomas; “and have you brought nothing away?—neither the splendid embroidery, nor the valuable point-lace?”

“It was a foolish affair,” replied the other, forcing a laugh; “but we have rescued our own worthy persons, which is somewhat wonderful, for, in the space of ten minutes, there was more powder puffed on the Bridge of the Rhine than would last for a year. His Highness himself, the Adjutant Delolay, attempted to arrest me; but I declined the honour in a manner which he will remember for some time.—Quick, fellow,” he added, addressing Morelli’s coachman, who stood staring at them in amazement; “put the horses to the carriage, and see you don’t lose a moment, for we must now set out on our journey.—And you, old gentleman,” he called to Morelli, “make ready—

you have as much reason to fear the officers of justice as I have ; and before half an hour is past, they will be here—You must make room for me in your carriage, were it only in gratitude for my being your preserver, of which you must now be aware.”

“ By all that is sacred, Ehrenfried, what is the matter ? ” said the pale old woman, as she approached the speakers on her return from her walk among the hills.

“ Nothing, mother,” he replied, “ but that the air here does not agree with me, and I must go where I can breathe more freely.”

“ What, wilt thou go away so soon again ? ” said Else, in a complaining tone, who, on hearing his voice, had hastily approached him. “ By the holy Saint Anthony, I will not bear this.”

“ Oh, there is much more than this to bear in the world, my dear,” replied Ehrenfried, with a wild laugh. “ What is the great affair ? another town, another maiden, and you too will soon find another bridegroom ; and then the unmanageable rogue who cannot deport himself to your mind, will soon be forgotten.”

With these words he rushed into the house, into which he was followed by Else and his sor-

rowful mother. Morelli with a joyful smile stepped back from the window, while Thomas with curses quitted the apartment.

“Thou hearest,” said Morelli to Adeline, “we are instantly to continue our journey. Get everything prepared, so that there may be no delay on our part.”

“How, my uncle,” exclaimed Adeline in surprise, “will you travel with these suspicious men? will you trust yourself with such wicked and lawless people?”

“They won’t harm us,” replied Morelli, with a peculiar smile; “that I know well enough, and from this man we have nothing to fear.”

“Do you know him?” said the astonished Adeline, as she hastily rose from her couch; “then say what is his occupation? Who is he?”

“Nothing so very extraordinary as thou seemest to believe, child,” replied Morelli; “he is what is commonly called a smuggler; a man who wages petty warfare against the laws of the great Emperor,—a daring spirit, who generously dispenses in bushels what the great nation measures out in spoonfulls; but in every respect a man of honour, and one who merits your highest esteem.”

At this intelligence Adeline became almost

speechless, and her sadness deepened as she reflected that she was about to be still farther separated from her dear Reinhold, and that they were on their journey to a foreign country, where an unknown destiny awaited her; for her fate hung upon the will of the stern man into whose power her evil lot had thrown her; but with pious resignation she ejaculated, "God's will be done."

The carriage being now ready, Morelli led his niece down stairs, where Ehrenfried, who had exchanged his peasant's jacket for a neat travelling dress, stood ready to receive them. He greeted Adeline with respect, but her uncle with easy familiarity. Else stood on one side weeping violently; but Frau Martha was nowhere to be seen. In silence Morelli and his niece took their places in the carriage; and Ehrenfried, who had thrown the coachman a small portmanteau, was just about to follow, when his progress was arrested by Thomas, who with a sullen countenance stepped up to him, and said in an insolent tone, "I shall plainly ask you, if you think that I am to believe your story, that there has been nothing gained, and if you expect that I am to remain inactive here on your business, and to guard your chickens without any recompense? This I will not do, Fredel,

and you must now settle honestly with me, before I will allow you to go quietly away."

"As if I needed thy permission! Why, I have half a mind to chastise you for your boldness—but as you are a poor devil, here is an alms for you," said Ehrenfried, as he contemptuously threw him a couple of gold pieces, which Thomas greedily seized.

"Many thanks," replied the *ci-devant* miner, with a sneer; "money is money, and whether it be called an alms, or a reward, is all one to me. But something moves yonder in the thicket, and before you can escape from this, they will be at your heels."

With these words Thomas suddenly disappeared, and flew with the speed of lightning into the neighbouring wood, whilst Ehrenfried's quick eyes soon discovered that the horseman, who approached from the heights at full speed, was neither an officer nor a gendarme.

"Don't be uneasy," said he to the anxious Morelli; "Thomas is a coward, and has taken a gnat for an elephant; the rider who approaches I know well, he comes as a friend, and not as an enemy."

Morelli, however, notwithstanding this assu-

rance, did not venture to look out of the carriage; and Adeline sat lost in deep thought, without participating in the slightest degree in what was passing around her. Meanwhile the rider, who had now reached the yard, quickly sprung from his horse, which, completely exhausted by its exertions, sunk powerless on the ground.

“Brother—Ehrenfried, save thyself!” exclaimed the stranger, with breathless haste; “thy pursuers are at hand—not a moment must be lost. I shall remain behind to protect our mother.”

The sound of this voice awakened Adeline from her mournful reverie. These words were surely spoken by him whose image reigned triumphant in her soul.

“Reinhold, my own Reinhold!” she exclaimed, as she attempted to throw herself from the carriage.

“Move not,” whispered Morelli in her ear, while he harshly pulled her back. Ehrenfried now hastily sprung into the carriage, and the coachman set off at full speed. In vain were the complaints of the miserable Adeline, in vain she implored her stern uncle for but one moment’s delay;—he coldly admonished her to be quiet; whilst Ehrenfried, who still continued to wave his hand

in token of farewell to those he had left behind, observed nothing of what was passing in the carriage.

“What was that?” said the stranger, as he gazed after the vehicle, which at this moment turned a corner of the wood. “Surely Adeline called my name?—her cry of anguish still sounds in my ear—Is it possible?—can she be in that carriage which has just driven from me, and which has already vanished from my sight?”

Frau Martha, who now came weeping from the house, on seeing the stranger, extended her arms, and said, with deep emotion—“Blessed be my Reinhold! Come to the heart of thy mother, who, in losing a disobedient child, has gained a dutiful and pious son—Heaven itself has led you hither at this hour.”

Hastily disengaging himself from his mother’s embrace, Reinhold assailed her with questions respecting Ehrenfried’s travelling companions; and from the information which Frau Martha gave him, he became convinced that it was indeed Morelli and his niece, who, as Ehrenfried’s prisoners, had been detained beneath his mother’s roof. With ardent longing he looked towards the skirts of the wood, behind which the travellers had vanished. Ah, how did his heart powerfully urge him to lose

no time in following this much-loved one—and what ardent desire assailed his inmost soul to accomplish his wishes ;—but a sacred duty withheld him.

After the adventure upon the Rhine Bridge, Reinhold was carried before the Prefect at Strasburg ; but upon showing his papers, and informing him of his diplomatic character, he soon obtained his freedom. But he learnt that an imminent danger threatened his family. Ehrenfried was too well known to the douaniers, as a most expert and daring smuggler, for them to have any doubts in regard to his person. The last bold attempt upon the Rhine Bridge had exposed the danger of the smuggler's adventure in its fullest extent. No time was lost in applying to a magistrate for a warrant to seize his person, and make strict search for the contraband goods at his abode. Both were granted, and a detachment of gendarmes, accompanied by a number of douaniers, were immediately dispatched to the retired dwelling of Frau Martha.

Reinhold now perceived that, under these circumstances, not only Ehrenfried, but also the property of his mother, was in danger ; and, from her great age and delicacy of health, he feared the consequences might even prove fatal to her. He

therefore applied for, and succeeded in obtaining, a counter order, which limited the first. The captain of the smugglers was alone to be apprehended, and the search for the contraband goods was relinquished. By a short path through the mountains, he outstripped the detachment, and reached his mother's dwelling just in time to hasten the flight of his proscribed brother, and to gain a trace of his beloved Adeline, who, with her uncle, had so unexpectedly vanished from Paris, where Reinhold's employment at that time detained him. He pretty well guessed the reasons which induced Morelli to quit the capital in such mysterious haste; indeed, Morelli himself, while urging him to a breach of duty, for which treachery the possession of Adeline was the promised reward, had given him a distinct view of the dangerous and dishonourable business in which he had embarked. His proposals, however, Reinhold most decidedly declined, which so enraged Morelli, that he forbid him to enter his house; and, not satisfied with this, he commanded Adeline to break off all intercourse with him. But what can oppose the subtilty of love? Adeline and Reinhold saw each other in secret, and exchanged vows of eternal constancy. But when the beloved of his soul was so suddenly torn

from him, he resolved to quit Paris ; and having obtained from his ambassador leave to travel into Germany, where he suspected Morelli had gone, he, with the view of accelerating his journey, provided himself with the pass of a courier, and hastily set off. We have seen how the strange occurrence upon the Rhine Bridge put a stop to his hasty journey, and how he found his Adeline only to lose her again. For some moments Reinhold, irresolute what course to pursue, stood by the side of his mother, who still tenderly held his hand ; but as his eyes fell upon his horse, which now lay dying on the ground, he sighed, and said,—“ And even were I willing to leave my mother, now that I have happily obtained a letter of protection for her property, the thing is impossible.” And, returning the caresses of Frau Martha with all his former affection, he stepped with her into their peaceful dwelling, where a thousand sweet and consoling recollections of his childhood were awakened.

CHAPTER V.

My soul, they say, is hard and cold,
And nought can move me ;
Perchance 'tis so 'midst life's wild whirl—
But, oh, on Beauty's lips, my girl,
'Twill melt like Cleopatra's pearl ;—
Then love me—love me.

HENRY NEELF.

THE first moment in which Morelli and Ehrenfried found themselves alone upon their journey, the latter seized the opportunity of entering into a conference with the former, the purport of which was to Morelli as unexpected as important.

“Mein Herr Morelli,” Ehrenfried began, with a peculiar smile, “I have remarked, during the short period that I have had the honour of your acquaintance, that you seem gifted with a most uncommon degree of penetration ; for I observe that you have already discovered that your travelling companion is neither more nor less than a smuggler, who now finds himself in the agreeable situation of an outlaw. But if you imagine that I have

any doubts as to your profession, you are wrong. Look, if you please, at these charming documents, which on the first night of our acquaintance you threw from you with such scornful contempt, with the intention, however, of regaining them ; and, from the circumstance of their being now in my possession, you may be convinced that I have a perfect knowledge of the nature of your services."

Morelli hastily seized the well-known pocket-book which the forester presented to him. He instantly opened it, and whilst he glanced over the contents, he said, with the greatest indifference of voice and manner,—“ Mere trifles—unimportant memoranda belonging to my private affairs. It must have fallen from the carriage without my observing it ; but, at any rate, I am very much obliged for its being returned."

“ Fallen from the carriage !” replied Ehrenfried, while he fixed his eyes significantly upon Morelli. “ Truly,” continued he, ironically, after a short silence, during which Morelli secured the pocket-book, and then looked at the forester with apparent tranquillity,—“ truly, it is a very likely thing, that a pocket-book with such contents as these, should fall from the carriage ; and also, that a faithful servant of the invincible Emperor should

not take better care of it. But, mein Herr Morelli, 'tis in vain you play this farce with me; for although the ciphers conceal many of the secrets of your little book, yet the rest of the papers make it clear enough, that if either of us have cause to be ashamed of the company of the other, it is not you."

"What do you mean by that?" replied Morelli, in a cold but surprised tone. "How dare you speak in so insulting a manner to me? You, whom a word from my mouth would consign to the punishment of the law, to shame, and to misery?"

"Oh, what laughable generosity," interrupted Ehrenfried, "which would throw away a dollar to gain a louis-d'or! I know the fate which awaits me, should I fall into the hands of my enemies. A thousand times have I reflected upon it; a thousand times has it presented itself to my imagination. The life of a galley-slave is dreadful; but a powerful mind, supported by its own principles, can both endure and overcome. You, mein Herr Morelli, think you can inform against me, and presume upon it; but a rope for the neck of the spy, as the proverb goes—and up with him to the first tree which is strong enough to bear the weight of his sins.—Oh, do you grow pale? Do

you tremble? Where is now your boasted composure? Where the contempt with which you looked down upon me? But fear nothing; it will give me little pleasure to bring you to the rope, and myself to the galleys. A smuggler and a spy are excellent company for each other, although they are not alike in all cases—and least of all in ours.”

The paleness of death overspread the countenance of Morelli—his limbs shook under him, and he was obliged to sit down for some moments to recover himself. After a short rest, which appeared to restore his self-possession, he took several turns through the apartment, and then placing himself close before the forester, he said,—“ Believe what you will,—but now learn from myself that I am what you have named. We have nothing to fear from each other—our exchange of confidence will secure our mutual silence. But what makes you entertain the absurd idea that your profession is more honourable than that of a spy?”

“ Do you wish an explanation?” said Ehenfried; “ well, here it is: For the sake of paltry gain, you serve the designs of others; deceive and abuse the confidence of those who trust in you; seek by bribery and deceit to seduce others from their duty; and, by giving imperfect information

to your employers, the peace and happiness of innumerable families, and the lives of thousands of innocent persons, are sacrificed. Is not, then, your profession one of destruction and treachery against the whole human race? What have I in common with all this?" continued the forester, while he proudly drew himself up. "I wage open war against oppressive laws—against a detested power, which alone I oppose, whilst I benefit thousands who bleed under its scourge—nor have I ever stained my hands with the gains which my enterprises brought. I conducted everything, but my companions reaped the fruits of it; for I had no other motives for my actions than hatred and revenge. I was the assistant of a rich merchant in a large town on the Rhine. In consequence of a new regulation regarding commerce, the man who loved me as a father became a beggar, and did not long survive this misfortune. Then I stood upon his grave, and solemnly vowed to effect the ruin of his destroyers. To accomplish this as a soldier, appeared to me impossible. War, at this time, raged in Russia and on the borders of Portugal; and having little choice, I adopted that plan which appeared most likely to facilitate my views, and became the leader of a band of bold and enterprising

smugglers. Of my deeds I shall not boast ; but this war which I waged, sometimes with cunning, sometimes with force, appeared to me as just as any other. Again I assert, that I have never touched the smallest part of the booty ; and should the world rank me as a criminal, and brand me as a transgressor against the laws, yet still I bear about me a proud consciousness of rectitude and honour."

In proportion as Ehrenfried's vehemence increased, the usual coldness and composure of Morelli returned. " You please yourself with a strange fancy, my young friend," said he, with a smile ; " and we seem to entertain very opposite opinions. You feel too deeply, but that is a fault which time will rectify ; and," continued he, as he took the hand of the forester, " I hope, when you have overcome this foolish whim, to see you at some future period become an able and a cunning spy !"

Ehrenfried indignantly snatched his hand from that of his companion, and with one glance of contempt at Morelli, he quitted the apartment, without even deigning a reply.

Adeline bore the fatigues of their hurried journey, which was continued without interruption, with patience and submission. From the moment

she discovered that Ehrenfried was the brother of her dear Reinhold, she became more cheerful, and regarded her travelling companion not only without fear, but even with delight. A secret influence seemed to attract her towards Ehrenfried, and to unite her more closely to her beloved, from whom she was separated. In the features of her companion she found a strong resemblance to Reinhold, and she gazed on Ehrenfried till she fancied that his dark cheek had assumed a brighter tint; that the bold and reckless expression of his eyes had changed to a look of mildness and benignity, and that it was indeed her own Reinhold who sat beside her; and that in a peaceful and happy union they journeyed together through life.

Who shall presume to smile at the self-deception of the poor maiden, to whom the reality of bliss was denied—to whom nothing but the delusive pictures of her own imagination remained to console her for the disappointment of every earthly hope? Adeline became more cheerful as she thought of intrusting the lately dreaded Ehrenfried with the secrets of her heart. During their journey, he treated her with respectful attention, and frequently protected her from the severity of Morelli, over whom he exercised an influence totally

incomprehensible to her. For the first time, she now felt herself freed from that restraint which the presence of Morelli had hitherto imposed; and she only now perceived the extent of the authority which he had usurped over her. A young man of Ehrenfried's feelings and disposition, could not long be in the society of such a lovely being as Adeline without experiencing the power of her charms. His pure and innocent mind excited an admiration which soon ripened into a glowing and ardent affection. His wild and unsettled life had hitherto prevented him from thinking deeply of love; for although he had plighted his faith to his cousin Else, it was more the power of habit than a deep and ardent attachment which bound him to her. True, he intended to marry her, but he did not consider himself obliged upon that account to deny himself any pleasure which came in his way—more especially as his prospect of becoming a domestic husband was so distant and uncertain. Besides, Adeline's friendly behaviour towards him, and her looks, which often unconsciously rested upon him, confirmed him in the pleasing delusion that he was not indifferent to her, and he thought he would be a great fool not to take advantage of

the affection of his beautiful companion. The travellers now reached a small cheerful village of Franconia, where, as no post-horses could be obtained, they were forced to remain some hours.

Morelli gloomily seated himself at a window of the little inn, and looked carelessly at the opposite houses, while the beauty of the day tempted Adeline to the adjoining flower-garden, where she could dwell on the remembrance of her beloved and absent Reinhold. She felt more than usually disposed to melancholy, and struggled in vain against the sadness that oppressed her, and which at length broke forth in an uncontrollable burst of grief. Tears still dimmed her eyes, and slowly rolled down her pale cheeks, when Ehrenfried unexpectedly approached her from a neighbouring arbour.

“Do you weep, Adeline?” said he, with a gentleness of tone which strongly reminded the maiden of her Reinhold, whose soft and tender voice she thought had again penetrated her heart; “who is so cruel as to cause those tears to flow? Would your uncle,” he continued, with vehemence, “again tyrannize over you—is it he who disturbs your tranquillity? Tell me, dearest Adeline, for I

have the power of preventing him from harming you !”

“ You err,” replied Adeline, drying her tears ; “ the grief which I feel is not new—the sorrow which oppresses my heart has long been its guest, and is now fast destroying my peace, my happiness, my life.”

“ That shall not be !” exclaimed Ehrenfried with indignant vehemence.—“ No, maiden,” he continued in a softer tone, and looking tenderly at Adeline, “ thy life shall not be poisoned through the wickedness of others—trust yourself to me—nothing is too great, too dangerous for me to accomplish for you—I will shield thee from every evil—I will tame your wicked uncle, and bring him under subjection. I will destroy every weed which obstructs your path, and will strew thy way with blossoms of peace and happiness.—Yes, maiden, trust me, and be mine !”

With these words he threw his arms around Adeline, who, pale as death, and hardly trusting her senses, stood gazing at him. “ Do you think,” he continued, while he pressed her to his heart, “ that your uncle will oppose my wishes ? Oh, no—he knows his own interest, and dare not—his dangerous occupation is well known to me. I

have held a mirror before him, in which he with horror viewed his own picture, and which filled the heart of this grey-haired sinner with terror and dismay. I tell you he must, he shall——”

“And what is it you think of my uncle?” faltered Adeline; “of what designs do you suspect him?”

“Oh, I am aware of the nature of his designs; and were you, charming maiden, kept in ignorance of his plots? Had you never the least suspicion, that, as a spy of a power at war with France, he lived in the capital, where he spared no means to accomplish his designs, and that, with important documents, he is now on his return to his employer, where he hopes to reap a rich harvest?”

“Hold!” interrupted Adeline, while she impetuously disengaged herself from his arms; “I know enough—I know all! Oh, Heavens! is the profound mystery, which, as a threatening phantom, hovered over me, at length disclosed! Now it is clear that my fate hangs on the will of a man whom I abhor, and whom I must despise! Now I know also that I was the price at which my uncle would have purchased your brother’s treachery! Now I know why Reinhold is separated from me, and why my uncle hates him! The web of treachery

and deceit which encircled me is now unfolded, and now only do I discover that I have been a helpless instrument in the hands of a——” Here sobs and tears choked her utterance.

Astonished and amazed, Ehrenfried for some time regarded her in silence, then gently taking her hand, and raising it to his lips, he said, “Unfortunate maiden, had I but known that a merciful veil concealed from you the real character of your relation, I would not have withdrawn it. But did you not speak of my brother? You named Reinhold—you say your uncle hates him, and has separated him from you—What extraordinary circumstances still remain concealed?”

“You shall, you must learn everything,” said Adeline, as she dried her tears. “In Paris, I became acquainted with Reinhold. My uncle himself brought him to our house, as he probably thought, that under the mask of friendship he might insinuate himself into his confidence, and by these means obtain a knowledge of the affairs of the ambassador, which he could not hope to purchase from the honourable Reinhold with gold. His penetration soon discovered the situation of our hearts, and that we lived for each other; and

he appeared to sanction our affection. Many a long and peaceful hour have I spent with Reinhold— Often has he told me of his home, of his excellent mother, and of his wild, but good-hearted Ehrenfried. Then we consulted about our future union, and talked of making preparations for our domestic life, and vowed to live and die together. Of my uncle's consent we had no doubt; and it was determined that Reinhold should ask my hand from him. The result of their interview, and the reasons which made my uncle the determined enemy of Reinhold, your dreadful disclosure has, for the first time, informed me of. To suffice, my uncle coldly signified to me, that Reinhold should never again cross his threshold; and that I must break off all intercourse with him, as he never should be mine. My tears were answered with a laugh of scorn, and my prayers and entreaties with deep-wounding mockery, so that by his cruel and harsh behaviour, he has destroyed all the affection which I ought to feel for so near a relation. Reinhold entreated a secret interview. He would not confess to me the reason of my uncle's sudden opposition to our union, nor even allow me to suspect that he had relinquished the dearest object upon earth, rather than owe his happiness to a breach of duty. We had ar-

ranged our future interviews, and consoled ourselves with new hopes; when my uncle one night suddenly awakened me, and ordered me instantly to prepare to set out on an immediate journey. The feelings with which I quitted Paris I cannot describe. How we came into your mother's house, you best know; but a sweet foreboding took possession of my soul, when I found myself in her friendly neighbourhood; and when I remembered what my beloved had told me of his mother and his home, I felt as if all were indeed realized; and when I heard Reinhold's well-known voice, urging his brother to save himself by flight, and that he would remain behind and protect his mother, then the truth burst upon my soul,—it was to me, however, but a moment of joy, which quickly passed away. I have now unveiled my inmost soul to the brother of my Reinhold; he is the only confidant of my love, and surely he will not betray it."

Ehrenfried listened with the deepest attention to the speech of the maiden; but when she related to him the ties which united her to his brother, he allowed her hand to drop from his; and his eyes sought the ground. A short struggle arose in his breast, but it was soon decided; and turning with animated looks towards the anxious Adeline,

he said, "And by Heaven, Adeline, you shall not be deceived in me. Strange and wild Ehrenfried has been, but never base. Poor brother!" he continued to himself, "thou wert near the chosen of thy heart, and knew it not; and had you seized this opportunity, which chance had so luckily thrown in your way, you might have regained her."

"Believe me," said Adeline, earnestly, "he knew my voice, and that I was in the carriage that drove from him; but the fulfilment of a sacred duty prevented him from following. The sentiments which prompted this conduct I honour; it is for these feelings that I love him, and which are the only secure basis of a true and lasting affection."

"It may be as you say," said the forester, half aloud. "He repairs what I destroy; he protects what I endanger. Yes, he is what I am not—a good son, a friend of peace, a promoter of happiness; therefore, Adeline, he deserves you; and as surely as I shall in future be a better man than I have hitherto been, you shall be his. Yes, I am resolved to accomplish your union with my brother, and thus requite him in some degree for his generous forbearance and kindness towards me."

At this moment Morelli stepped from behind a tree, where he had overheard their conference.

“And is the uncle’s consent of no consequence?” said he, with a scornful laugh to Ehrenfried.—
“Truly, you think you have played a clever game; but the old man may yet turn up a trump, and spoil all. You have miscalculated, how easily a thoughtless youth may be outwitted in his plans.”

Adeline averted her face from the man, to whose conduct she was no longer a stranger, and who now stood unveiled before her. When Ehrenfried perceived him, he stood erect; and whilst he looked at him with the most sovereign contempt, replied, with all the haughtiness of voice and gesture which he could assume,—

“You have again missed your aim, my worthy gentleman. Do you not believe that it is in my power to bring you to the gibbet, and to procure for my brother, who stands as much above you as an honourable man stands above a scoundrel, that happiness which he so richly deserves, and which you would disturb? You see it is not prudent to provoke me, and I command you from this moment to consider and treat Adeline as the bride of my brother; and as such I know how to protect her against every one.”

With these words he seized the hand of the silent Adeline, and led her to the carriage, which stood in readiness at the door of the inn; whilst with a hell in his bosom, and looks which threatened a tempest, Morelli slowly followed.

CHAPTER VI.

How long wilt thou continue to take pleasure in sin ?
Repentance is not unpalatable—taste it.

Persian Poetry.

THE travellers continued their journey without interruption. Morelli's pass was in the proper form ; and before the bold attempt on the Rhine Bridge, Ehrenfried had provided himself with the necessary papers, to prevent detection on that side of the Rhine. From the time at which Ehrenfried informed Morelli, that he considered Adeline the bride of his brother, the intercourse betwixt the travellers assumed quite a different character. Formerly, Morelli ordered everything ; but now Ehrenfried took upon himself that charge. Adeline was treated by the brother of her Reinhold with the most marked respect ; and she now enjoyed a freedom which she had never before known. But towards her uncle, the forester assumed a tone of superiority, to which Morelli quietly submitted ; for

in the dangerous situation in which he found himself, he was too cautious and too prudent to irritate a character such as Ehrenfried.

It was Ehrenfried's wish to reach a division of the Allied army, which, on the termination of the truce of 1813, was assembling on the frontiers of Bohemia, for the purpose of acting against the common enemy.

He then designed to enter the army, and cared little under what banner he served, provided he were opposed to the French. These intentions were known to Morelli, who said to himself, "So much the better for me; I shall soon be freed from his control; and then the happy dreams of this silly child shall have an end, and the privileges which this fiery youth has usurped shall be restored to me. No, no, mein Herr Reinhold, Adeline shall never be your wife. Do you think that I have forgot the thousand louis-d'ors which I was forced to pay for secrets which I in vain endeavoured to obtain from you? Can you imagine that the remembrance of the disdain with which you looked down upon me, when I was fool enough to believe that you were worthy of my confidence, is effaced from my soul? You are mistaken. I remain your mortal enemy, and the time will come when I shall throw off this

tiresome mask, and show your insolent brother, that I am again master of my own will and actions."

In consequence of these reflections, Morelli conducted himself towards both Adeline and Ehrenfried with so much kindness and condescension, as induced the former to believe that he had no longer any hostility against Reinhold, and that he now thought it best to sanction a union on which her happiness depended. But Ehrenfried was not so easily deceived; he had long discovered Morelli's character, and suspected that his apparent softness was only assumed to conceal his inveterate malice; and that, under the mask of friendship and condescension, he tried to hide his treacherous intention of overturning his plan for his brother's happiness. But fortunately the forester had a project in contemplation, the success of which would completely counteract the plots of Morelli.

Morelli found that the company of such a spirited youth as Ehrenfried, was of infinite use to them in travelling on the route of the French army, various divisions of which were now hastening towards the Elbe; and it is difficult to say what the consequences might have been to both, had not Ehrenfried returned bold and confident replies to

the innumerable interrogations with which he was assailed. He well knew the arts of conciliation ; and his agreeable and lively manners seldom failed to make a favourable impression on all those with whom he came in contact. The travellers had now reached a small village in Saxony where they determined to remain for the present, as the army of the enemy was in the neighbourhood, and the French commander had issued orders to detain all travellers. The battles of Dresden, Katzbach, Dennewitz, and Culm, were fought ; but although the great army proclaimed all these victories, yet no one knew to which side the palm of triumph belonged.

In restless anxiety, Morelli strolled through the village, listened and inquired on all sides, but could obtain no certain intelligence of the real state of affairs ; till at length, by the merest accident, he learnt that a detachment of the enemy's troops was posted on the other side of the mountains, and not more than a day's journey from the village. From this moment he spared no exertions to procure a faithful messenger, whom he could dispatch to the commander of the post ; and after much trouble, he at length found one that he thought would suit his purpose. This person was

well acquainted with the neighbourhood, and promised to deliver the letter with which he was intrusted, and assured Morelli that he would take a by-path over the mountains, which he knew to be open, and near which he was certain none of the French soldiers were quartered. In spite of his great age and the difficulties of the undertaking, Morelli himself would have attempted to reach his friends, had he not been afraid to leave Adeline wholly in the power of Ehrenfried, who, he was convinced, would gladly seize this opportunity of uniting her to his brother. But however secretly Morelli had dispatched his messenger, the occurrence was suspected by Ehrenfried, who warned him of the danger into which he was running, and represented to him, that although they were near the accomplishment of their wishes, yet they ought to be cautious, as the slightest imprudence would inevitably plunge them in destruction. But Morelli denied everything, told Ehrenfried he was alarmed by a shadow, and at last succeeded in laughing him out of his fears.

Meanwhile, Adeline became from day to day more confidential with the brother of her Reinhold. The inactivity in which Ehrenfried was now compelled to live, tended to soften him, and his better

feelings now began to vanquish the strong passions which so long had held him in their bondage.

He thought with deep emotion of his mother, with sincere and ardent affection of his brother, and with newly-awakened love of the much injured Else. Ah! how did it grieve him to reflect on the pain he had inflicted on the good Frau Martha! —what agony was in the thought of the many sacrifices which Reinhold had imposed upon himself on his account, and that to fulfil the duty of a son, he had overcome his ardent desire to follow his beloved! How did he now repent of his harshness towards Else, who still so truly loved him, and to whom he had sworn affection and faith! In his imagination the maiden in all her beauty now stood before him, and filled his soul with a passionate love which he never before had known.

“ Adeline,” said he one day to her, “ I feel that my intercourse with you has made me a better man. But I know how to repay you for it; and, by Heaven, it is no empty promise which I make to secure your future happiness. I have much to repair, not only to my brother, but to my good mother and Else. Reinhold’s filial affection, which made him sacrifice his dearest hopes for me, and your devoted faith and attachment to

him, have placed a mirror before me, in which, to my great humiliation, I see how far I am from deserving to be called a good man. How disgraceful was it in me to break faith with one, to whom I had plighted my faith; and who gave me her affection in return; and how cruel to leave her to mourn over the broken vows and promises, in which she trusted! I must efface this shame. This very day will I write my brother, instantly to come hither; and then, Adeline, I shall present you to him, and say, There, brother, take her for your wife; her cruel uncle dares no longer refuse her; I have won and preserved her for you; she will reward you for what you have done for our mother; she will repay the obligations which you have heaped on my head. And if he comes on the wings of love, and brings with him my mother's pardon, and the assurance of Else, that in spite of my fickleness, in spite of my cruel return to her affection, her heart still clings to me, and that she will receive the prodigal, then, Adeline, shall I see my happy star again shine forth, and I shall obtain a possession, the value of which I have only now learnt to know—peace of mind."

"How, my friend," said Adeline with animation, "shall Reinhold indeed come here? And

will my dearest hopes, which I had almost resigned in despair, at last be accomplished? You say you will write him; but dare you venture that? will a letter not betray you, and frustrate all your plans?"

"I have considered that," replied Ehrenfried, "and have found a way to avoid the danger. I shall address my brother's letter to Thomas the miner, which will prevent detection, as he never was suspected of being connected with the smugglers; although, on account of his cunning and activity, we employed him as our secret scout to bring us all the intelligence he could pick up. So all will yet go well, and even our detention in this village, which I cursed, and thought so insupportable, will help to further our purpose."

"Thomas, did you call the man, to whom you mean to intrust this important intelligence?" asked the maiden, thoughtfully; "well do I remember him, but his appearance did not inspire me with a good opinion of him. In his eyes there lurked a malignity——"

"No forester, Adeline, will betray another," interrupted Ehrenfried; "I have known Thomas from a child, and I am aware that his prevailing passion is avarice. Reinhold will richly reward

him for the joyful news he brings ; this is all that Thomas cares about, and the matter is done and forgotten. Leave everything to me, Adeline ; too long have I acted to please myself only, without regarding the comfort of others, and it is time that this selfishness should have an end."

"I cannot, I dare not turn you from your purpose," replied Adeline ; "it accords so much with the dearest wishes of my heart, that I can say nothing against it. But I have one petition, which you must not deny me. Your remaining much longer in this place, is attended with the greatest danger ; suspicion lurks around your steps, and a drawn sword is suspended over your head. When this letter, which calls my Reinhold here, and on which my fate depends, is delivered ; and when you have fulfilled your duty towards your mother, your brother, and your betrothed, then promise me that you will instantly quit this place. You have youth and strength ; it will be an easy thing for you to climb the mountains, and by remote paths to reach a place of safety, where you may find an opportunity of employing yourself in some honourable profession. Yes, Ehrenfried, you must grant this for the sake of those who love you.

Every hour that you linger here increases my anxiety. I cannot bear to think that, on my account, you stake your freedom and your welfare. Relieve me from this torture, and when the letter is sent off, let us separate, and oh ! fly to some place of safety."

"Never," replied the forester, in a firm and decided tone—"I quit you not until Reinhold arrives and receives you from my hand, and until I put it out of the power of your uncle to exercise further tyranny over you. This is the first hour in which I am satisfied with myself. This is a good and a just vow, and from it I will not swerve; I stake my life upon its fulfilment; and if I am ruined by it, I shall not repent, but shall rejoice in the consciousness of having left behind me one good deed on which my family can dwell with affection and satisfaction."

All the attempts of Adeline to shake Ehrenfried's determination were fruitless. With all the warmth of feeling which his intercourse with Adeline had called forth, he wrote to his mother, his brother, and his betrothed. His better feelings had only slumbered; Adeline and Reinhold's example had now awakened them; and in pouring out the feelings of his heart, he acknowledged with joy the

happy change which so short a time had accomplished in him, and openly confessed his deep repentance for all his errors. In truth, he appeared to himself almost in the light of a stranger, whose sentiments he was compelled to honour. Thus there arose in him that true self-respect which prizes virtue for its own sake.

Else's affectionate and still attached heart surely could not resist this candid confession—surely his mother must forgive, when informed of his return to honour and duty. This conviction brought serenity to his soul, and consoled and strengthened him in his present dangerous situation.

As proposed, the packet was addressed to Thomas the miner, who was promised a handsome reward on its speedy and safe deliverance; and it was dispatched immediately by Ehrenfried. Days and weeks elapsed, however, but still no Reinhold and no answer appeared. Adeline became anxious and uneasy, and all the attempts of Ehrenfried to dispel the clouds which overcast her lovely countenance were totally unavailing. Morelli, too, had for some time appeared gloomy and depressed. The confidential messenger whom he had sent to the camp of the enemy had not yet returned. In vain he consoled himself from day

to day with the hope that the man was detained by some accidental circumstances, and that at last he would appear. He came not; and now Morelli was assailed by all the agony and fears of the consequences of a discovery, or perhaps the treachery of the messenger himself. His feelings were the more agonizing, from having no one to whom he could impart them, and from whom he might expect sympathy and consolation. The forester, who had assumed towards him a commanding tone, he looked upon as his most inveterate enemy; and as to Adeline, towards whom he was conscious of having acted with baseness and duplicity, he believed she hated him, without considering, that although she never could approve of his conduct, she would always regard him as the brother of her mother. His whole frame was powerfully shaken; and as he reflected that the increasing infirmities of old age would not long endure the violence of the passions which the danger of his situation occasioned, he determined, at any price, to free himself, by a decisive step, from this state of continual and insupportable agitation.

Meanwhile the fortune of war seemed inclined to favour the allies of the French. The French army withdrew from the Elbe, and appeared to

intend to pitch their tents more in the centre of Saxony. The movements of the troops which were assembling from all quarters, and the extraordinary haste of the soldiers in securing provisions, all indicated the proximity of a powerful antagonist, and the expectation of an approaching engagement, the result of which was of the greatest importance to the travellers. However much Ehrenfried wished to see Germany delivered from the dominion of a foreign power, yet even should this hope be fulfilled by a victory over the enemy, still he feared that, as soon as Morelli was freed from his sway, he would again resume his former severity towards Adeline, and like some malignant demon, step betwixt her and Reinhold, which would frustrate his benevolent plan, and prevent him from making that return for all his brother's sacrifices, which he so ardently wished. Every hour brought detachments of French troops in and around the village, and each moment augmented the probability that an early day would decide the fate of the contending armies. Reinhold came not, and they could not now expect to hear from him, as all the posts were stopped. Ehrenfried wandered about, lost in deep thought, while Adeline resigned herself to her grief, and the

complete hopelessness which had taken possession of her. Until now Ehrenfried's cheering conversation had always composed her ; but even his sanguine and daring spirit was broken ; and in his gloomy mien the unhappy Adeline thought she read the destruction of her long cherished hopes.

CHAPTER VII.

Slight are the outward signs of evil thought ;
Within—within—'twas there the spirit wrought !
Love shows all changes—Hate, Ambition, Guile,
Betray no further than the bitter smile.

BYRON.

ONE stormy and tempestuous evening, a carriage stopped at the residence of the travellers. Adeline, who was alone in her chamber, inspired with new hope, sprung to the door, towards which she heard footsteps hastily approaching.

“ It is he !” she faltered, as she pressed her hand upon her throbbing heart ; but the thrill of joy so overpowered her, that a sudden faintness forced her to return to her seat. But it was not the noble form, not the mild blooming countenance of her beloved, which met her view as the door was thrown open, and he who had occasioned so much emotion stepped into the apartment ; but the gloomy Morelli, who, with a smile of scorn, placed

himself before Adeline, and said, with chilling coldness : “ The carriage which is below is for us ; we must instantly quit this place, for danger presses, and we have already lost too much time in our useless detention here. All that is requisite is already prepared ; what is superfluous must be left behind, and at the end of our journey we shall find what will richly make amends for all we may lose. Give me your hand, Adeline—your uncle will from henceforth be your guide.”

Morelli uttered the last words with a significant emphasis, which, however, Adeline heeded not ; for the beginning of his speech had so surprised her, and so suddenly plunged her from the summit of hope into an abyss of misery, that stunned by the blow, she sat in speechless amazement with her eyes fixed upon him. She had long foreboded that Ehrenfried’s kind exertions for her happiness would be unavailing, and that the deceit and cunning of Morelli would yet prevail ; but when the cruel certainty stood before her of the sacrifice which was demanded of her, and that the moment she quitted that house Reinhold would be lost to her for ever, her mind sunk under the burden of her misery, and she gazed in astonishment on the man, who, with such cold scorn, had announ-

ced to her the wretchedness of her future existence. It was some moments ere she was convinced that it was not some horrible dream from which she had suddenly awakened—and which had stopped her pulse, and turned her heart's blood into ice.

Morelli knew the strength of Adeline's feelings, and was prepared for this burst of grief; but far from sympathizing in her wretchedness, he looked at her with cold severity, and after a short silence said, "Why dost thou tarry? by what arguments would you justify your disobedience to the brother of your mother? Do you brave me, trusting to the assistance of another to frustrate my plans and free you from my authority? You shall find, however, that I have provided against this, and that where I cannot prevail by fair means, I know how to employ force."

Adeline rose slowly from her seat, and, determined not to augment the triumph of her cruel uncle by exposing the agony of her wounded heart, she summoned to her aid all the strength and courage of her pure soul, that no outward sign might indicate the wretchedness which dwelt within; and proudly placing herself before her uncle, said, "I know the duty which, as a relation, I owe you, and I shall perform it. But I have also other

duties to fulfil, and I shall not, as hitherto, preserve a criminal silence, when I see those violated. Why should Ehrenfried be kept in ignorance of our intentions? Why should we not put it in his power to accompany us, to whom we owe so much, and whose detention here is attended with so much danger?"

"You are right, Adeline," replied Morelli, carelessly, "and I do not disapprove of your sentiments, and were Ehrenfried here, I would make the proposal to him; but where he has gone, no one knows, and the pressure of circumstances will not allow me to wait nor to search for him."

Adeline saw there was no truth in her uncle's professions; but, helpless and unprotected, she was forced, however reluctantly, to submit to his commands. Suppressing a sigh, she took the arm of Morelli, and was preparing to leave the apartment, when suddenly the door was burst open, and, with sparkling eyes, and furious countenance, Ehrenfried rushed into the room.

"God be praised!" exclaimed Adeline, while she disengaged herself from the arm of Morelli, and with newly awakened hopes approached Ehrenfried. Morelli regarded him with a morose and gloomy look; but the next moment it vanished, and the

usual unmeaning smile again took possession of the old man's countenance.

“What is the meaning of this? What treachery do you meditate,” said Ehrenfried, fiercely accosting Morelli, “that in my absence you would secretly set out on your journey, and carry off my brother's bride by force? This shall not succeed, mein Herr Morelli; for I have a few words to say to you, which shall sound like a clap of thunder in your ear, and remove your desire to baffle me in my absence.”

Adeline looked anxiously at them both; the one defended her happiness, her life, while the other stood prepared to accomplish her destruction; but, alas! to submit herself to the will of the latter, was a sacred duty which she must fulfil.

“I will not discuss by what right you usurp an authority over my actions and those of my niece,” replied Morelli; “but you err if you imagine that the fear of you induced me to plan a secret departure, to free me from your power. You are at liberty to choose whether you will accompany us or not. I shall esteem the society of so courageous a man very advantageous to me during our dangerous and fatiguing journey.”

“Oh, I understand you, mein Herr, and know

how to value your encomiums," replied the forester, with a laugh of derision. "You think that if you could but reach those whose honourable commission you bear, you would then be released from me, and thus break the chain with which I hold you in subjection. All is over, mein Herr; for upon no account shall I permit you to use the least compulsion towards Adeline."

"Compulsion!" said Morelli, with feigned surprise; "who ever thought of that? Adeline has free liberty of choice.—Speak then," he continued, turning towards her—"Will you remain here with this man, or will you fulfil the duty which you owe the brother of your mother, and follow me?"

Adeline cast one sorrowful look on Ehrenfried, and then answered with firmness and decision—"I know what is proper, my uncle, and I am ready to accompany you; for, although you offered me to the noble Reinhold, as the price of his treachery, and thereby forfeited your paternal right over me, yet I swore to my mother on her death-bed, to honour and to obey you; and to this oath I will be faithful in all things which do not run counter to justice and virtue.—Let us go—I am ready."

"But I will not permit it!" said Ehrenfried, with vehemence, whilst he held Adeline back.—"Shall

the happiness of my brother be sacrificed to an erroneous and a false feeling of duty?—For the last time, mein Herr Morelli, will you relinquish all thoughts of this sudden journey, or not?”

“I will not,” replied the latter, with determination.

“Enough,” said Ehrenfried, furiously, whilst he stepped between Adeline and her uncle.—“You will not? you shall by Heaven, for I shall instantly summon the French officer, who is now in this house, and discover to him what business you carry on, even at the risk of impeaching myself also, and of falling into the hands of justice. Adeline will then be free; your tyranny over her will be at an end, and my brother will quickly arrive here to carry home his bride.”

“For the love of Heaven!—” exclaimed the pale and terrified Adeline, wringing her hands.

“Peace, child!” interrupted Morelli, “things are not so bad as they appear;” and turning to Ehrenfried, he said, with immovable coldness, “Again outwitted, my young, hot-headed friend. I see very plainly, that were it not for the shrewd and malicious uncle, the worthy brother of the young bride, as you are pleased to call my niece, would soon accomplish his purpose, and carry her

home to his Black Forest. The officers of the Great Army know how to value such booty, and the unprotected maiden would be the most welcome capture in the world."

"Monster, malicious scoundrel!" exclaimed the furious Ehrenfried, with a threatening gesture towards Morelli.

At this moment a loud noise was heard, as of people ascending the stairs; heavy footsteps and the clang of arms resounded through the passage; the door of the apartment was burst open, and before the travellers had recovered from their surprise, the room was filled with soldiers.

"In the name of the Emperor," said a voice which Ehrenfried immediately recognised, "take that rascal prisoner."

It was the Adjutant Delolay, who stood before the forester. The dark red scar, which Ehrenfried's sword had imprinted in the encounter on the Rhine Bridge, still marked his forehead. With the quickness of lightning, Ehrenfried drew a pistol from his breast pocket, and levelled it at his antagonist; but while in the act of discharging it, he was seized from behind, and the shot struck the ceiling. With a shriek, Adeline sunk

insensible upon a seat ; while Morelli, who wished to remain unnoticed, sneaked into a corner of the apartment.

“ Have I got you at last, knave ?” said Delolay, as his looks rested with a triumphant smile upon the prisoner ; “ keenly and ardently have I pursued you, and fortune has now favoured me, by giving you up to my revenge, and from which you shall not escape. You have no bridge here to leap over—no stream, no boats, to save thy forfeited life ; the Bridge of Death has but one outlet, and that lies on the other side.—Away with him to prison, and to-morrow for justice.”

Ehrenfried would have spoken, but notwithstanding his powerful opposition, the soldiers dragged him away. It was now only, that Delolay observed Morelli, who was slowly stealing from his concealment, to a side door, through which he intended to escape.

“ Stop, mein Herr,” said the Adjutant, whilst his eyes inquisitively examined the old man. “ I have found you in the company of a very dangerous person, a villain, who, for his rascally attempt to assassinate me, an officer of the Great Army, has incurred the penalty of the laws. Under these

suspicious circumstances, which truly your behaviour does not tend to remove, I must request to see your passport."

With a composed countenance, Morelli approached, and instantly gave the passport to the officer, who silently glanced at the paper, while a frown passed over his forehead, and his countenance assumed an extraordinary expression, which Morelli, who was attentively watching him, tried in vain to unriddle.

"You call yourself the Mechanic Morelli?" said Delolay, as he folded the paper, and put it into his pocket. "But what would you say, were I to inform you, that I know more of you than you do of yourself? and, for instance, tell you, that you are no other than the designing Merchant Morell, from Brunswick, who, the better to avoid discovery, has metamorphosed himself into a Mechanic, and has added the Italian *i* to his name, in order to live unsuspected in France, and as a spy, gain intelligence for the enemy? Truly, mein Herr, I believe this is a piece of news that will not particularly please you. But as to its truth, you need have no doubts, as I brought it with me fresh from head-quarters."

“ This must be a mistake,” faltered Morelli, while his limbs trembled, and the agony of death pierced his soul.

“ A mistake ?” said the Adjutant scornfully to his victim, who in vain endeavoured to conceal his terror ; “ it must be on your side then, seeing you mistake yourself for another ; and to serve your own ends, have assumed a name which does not belong to you. But I shall give you sufficient proof that you are too well known to us for any mistake ; for the last messenger whom you sent with secret dispatches to the enemy, was stupid enough to fall into the hands of our outposts.”

At this discovery, Morell, as we shall now call him, stood annihilated before the Frenchman. His hands dropped down by his sides ; his limbs tottered, and his head fell upon his breast.

“ Quick, comrades,” called Delolay, to some of the soldiers who remained ; “ seize that gentleman, and carry him to prison to his companion. This is a good and unlooked-for capture, for which we shall reap both praise and thanks. Search him strictly, and also the travelling carriage, which stands below. Bring me whatever papers you may find ; meanwhile, I myself shall search here. We have taken two scoundrels at one blow, and to-

morrow or next day we shall give them some lead nuts to crack together, which will not be very palatable to them. Now, away with the spy ! his presence is hateful to me.”

Morell now became totally dejected, and the state of his mind affected and weakened his body. He would have spoken ; but his tongue denied its office, and as he was unable to support himself, the soldiers were forced to carry him away. Delolay now examined the few articles which were in the apartment, but without finding anything of importance. As he was just about to leave the room, his eyes fell upon the still insensible Adeline. The appearance of the beautiful maiden, who in one of the prisoners had perhaps lost a friend and protector, and in the other a near relation, inspired him with compassion. His heart was susceptible of tenderness ; and it was only where his honour was concerned, which he imagined was the case in regard to Ehrenfried, or where duty forced him to be rigid, as in the case of the spy, who deserved no mercy, that he ever indulged in cruel and implacable severity. All his endeavours to restore her to animation were unsuccessful, and as his affairs were pressing, and he could no longer remain, he called the hostess, a benevolent and

compassionate woman, and committed the unconscious Adeline to her care. He then hastily quitted the house, in which he had found his long-sought-for and hated enemy, and what was of still more importance, a traitor to his Emperor and his country.

CHAPTER VIII.

My good friends, think sometimes that life is but a journey, and that God has granted us virtue as the best companion we can have on the road. If Heaven bless you with children, teach them early to love their God; and never forget to impress upon their minds, that the ungrateful person is like the mountain of sand, which swallows up, with eagerness, the beneficent rains of Heaven.

Literary Gazette.

THE smuggler and the spy were imprisoned in the same apartment, and, to prevent them from approaching or annoying each other, they were chained to separate corners. Each, believing the other to be the cause of his destruction, bore the most inveterate and deadly hatred towards his enemy. Ehrenfried was convinced that Morell had betrayed him, which accounted for the arrival of the guard just as they were setting out upon their secret journey. "It is unfortunate for him," so Ehrenfried argued, "that he delayed his departure, or that the guard did not appear a little sooner; however, he has fallen into the trap which he laid for me, and is now known for what he

really is, a despicable spy." He turned himself gloomily upon the couch. No sound escaped his lips, but the feelings which oppressed his inmost soul were of the most grievous and bitter kind. Ah! how willingly would he have suffered the shameful death of a malefactor, to which he was now exposed, had he succeeded in giving Adeline to Reinhold's arms, and had received his mother's forgiveness, and the assurance of the continued friendship and affection of his beloved Else! Such were the reflections of Ehrenfried. Morell now recovered from a state of insensibility only to fall into the ravings of fever; he tore at his chains, gnawed them with his teeth, and uttered the most dreadful imprecations. With the fury of a madman he reproached Ehrenfried for preventing his intended flight, who now learnt from these reproaches, that he considered him as the author of his misfortune.

"But I will yet reward thee, thou wild beast of the Black Forest," raved the unhappy man. "You think yourself better than I am; truly you believed that you were the wolf, and I the lamb, who must bare his neck to thy rancorous revenge; but the tables will soon be turned, and when the soul, separated from the body, attempts to soar to

heaven, then will I hang upon thee, and drag thee to the gulf below, where I have many good friends who will help to hold thee fast, and rack and torture thee after my own pleasure ! Then I will lead a joyful life ; and when the flame which now rages in my veins, and ascends even to my head, which will then become a ball of fire, and outshine the flames of hell, Satan himself must descend from his throne, and I shall be his successor !”

He concluded his speech with a horrid convulsive laugh, which was followed by fretful complaints, to which succeeded complete exhaustion ; but the composure of the invalid was of short duration, and only appeared to inspire him with new strength, to break out again into fresh paroxysms. Thus passed the whole of this fearful night, and a less courageous man than Ehrenfried might well have sunk under the horrors of his situation, which the total darkness of his prison did not tend to diminish. The animosity that the forester bore towards his supposed betrayer gave way to the deepest compassion ; he would willingly have rendered him every assistance which his fearful situation demanded, but which his fetters prevented him from administering. He attempted to call the attention of the guard, in order to procure a phy-

sician to the sufferer ; but they either did not, or would not hear him, so that he was forced to leave the helpless old man to his misery. But what sound was that, which suddenly struck his ear, whilst Morell lay in total insensibility ? Yes, by Heaven ! it was the thunder of cannon, that resounded through the stillness of the night, and was the signal of the approach of those who might yet bring rescue in the time of need. With intense and breathless anxiety, Ehrenfried listened to the distant sounds. Again the cannon thundered ; and it became evident that some decisive occurrence had taken place. At this moment, the tumult of confused voices, the hollow sound of a heavily-laden carriage, and the prancing of horses, were heard from the street. At every new noise, the hope of succour was strengthened in his breast, and from every distant sound he endeavoured to gain some intelligence of what was passing, but in vain ; for, at the very instant when the noise became still louder, and when he thought he could not fail of obtaining an explanation, his companion again broke out in the paroxysms of fever, and his ravings completely drowned the uproar in the street, and prevented him from ascertaining the cause of the tumult. Towards morning the inva-

lid became more composed, and Ehrenfried believed he slept. The noise now increased without, and at the first dawn of day, the cannon again roared, and apparently approached more near. Ehrenfried would willingly have imparted to his companion, who was now awake, the prospect of rescue which appeared; but he relinquished his intention, on perceiving how impossible it was for the unhappy sufferer to understand him. With a countenance pale as death, glancing eyes, and a childish smile upon his lips, the invalid, with his body half raised up, reclined upon his straw. He smiled to the latticed window, and at length said, “Adeline! —Who called that name? Was it a morning beam which broke through the lattice? or was it herself perhaps, who has climbed up to pity and console him who does not deserve her forgiveness? No, no!” he exclaimed, with an appalling scream, while he sprung up, and rattled his chains—“It was the spirit of her mother who spoke to me—It was the dead, who asked me if I had been faithful to the oath I swore to her on her death-bed, to be a tender father to her child—a true and faithful guide in her path through life. Oh, grief, that I have not been so! I have broken my oath! there is no mercy at the day of judgment for a perjurer—to

him the gates of eternal happiness are closed for ever !”

That hardened heart, which had formerly defied all serious calls to the duties of life, was now broken by sickness, and terrifying phantoms awoke the sleeping conscience of him, who had acknowledged no law but his own will, and who had given himself up to a hard and unfeeling selfishness. Exhausted, and weeping like a child, the sufferer fell back upon his miserable bed. Ehrenfried spoke to him, but he appeared not to hear him, and again a deep and continued faint came over him. Meanwhile, the tumult in the streets continued to increase, and the roar of the cannon, becoming louder every instant, plainly signified that the angel of death wandered through the battle-field, casting his black lot over thousands. But Ehrenfried saw in him the messenger of a new life. Every volley seemed to him to proclaim the approaching light of freedom ; and deep in the bottom of his soul there reigned a silent joy, on the triumph of his country, which the thunder of the slaughtering cannon confirmed and celebrated.

“ Oh, Reinhold ! oh, my brother !” he involuntarily exclaimed—“ Come and crown your wishes ; rescue Adeline, and make her happy ; and I

will cheerfully bleed under the hands of my blood-thirsty enemy; for then I shall die with the sweet foreboding, that the day of reckoning for the tyrant and the oppressor has arrived."

At this moment a loud noise was heard at the door of the prison; the heavy bolts were withdrawn, and a guard entered the apartment to conduct the prisoners to the hastily-assembled court-martial. From the situation of Morell they were soon convinced of the uselessness of bringing him to trial; therefore, Ehrenfried alone was carried before his judges, from whom he instantly saw he had neither mercy nor justice to expect; for his implacable enemy, the Adjutant Delolay, presided over the council; and his malicious and spiteful smile indicated his cruel satisfaction at the accomplishment of his long-cherished and murderous revenge.

"The sun of freedom which rises on my fatherland will not shine on me," said the forester to himself. "My lot is cast; and when my victorious countrymen arrive here, they will find me a stiff and cold corpse on the sand-hill which has drank my blood. My enemies know the value of time, and drive the death-hand forward. They shall not, however, find me easily daunted. With the

courage of a freeborn man, who fears not death, will I stand before them." And he fulfilled his determination. He undauntedly acknowledged that he had been in the service of the enemy ; and that, besides previously wounding an officer of the Great Army, he had fired a pistol at him, when he attempted to arrest him in the name of the Emperor, and he coldly and firmly acquainted his judges with more than was sufficient to justify them in condemning him to death, as a dangerous rebel, who had been taken with arms in his hands.

Owing to existing circumstances, the sentence was to be executed within an hour, in the court of the prison. Of the guilt with which the forester had charged himself, in carrying on the dangerous trade of a smuggler, there was no examination ; the lesser crime being overlooked on account of the greater.

A similar sentence was passed upon Morell, even although he had not been examined ; for the papers which were found upon him so clearly proved his crime, that there was no need for farther deliberation.

" This is a different game from that upon the Rhine Bridge," said Delolay, scornfully, as the guard approached to lead the forester away.—

“Where will you now find a horse that will dash with you through walls and iron doors, and save the audacious murderer from his just doom?”

Ehrenfried replied not, but with one look of sovereign contempt he turned from Delolay. Once more, however, was his composure to be overthrown, and his heart torn with agitating feelings. Through the door of the hall rushed a slender pale girl wringing her hands—It was Adeline. Her beautiful hair hung in dishevelled ringlets over her pale countenance; her eyes swam in tears; and without observing Ehrenfried she staggered towards Delolay, sobbing—“You have torn my uncle from me—Oh, grant my prayer! He is sick—he is dying. Let me go to him, that I may console him in his last hours, and so fulfil the vow I made my mother on her death-bed.”

“Lead her to him,” said the softened Delolay, while he beckoned a young officer to perform this office.

Ehrenfried had just reached the prison when Adeline rushed in, and sunk down by the side of her uncle, who, notwithstanding the aberration of his mind, instantly knew her. He looked at her with a childish smile, stroked her cheeks, and said, “Ah, Adeline, is it you? It is so good of you to

visit me here in my summer palace! Come here, and let us amuse ourselves together, and we shall be so happy. I have given you but little pleasure all my life, but now it shall be otherwise, and you shall have everything you wish for."

Adeline was deeply grieved and agitated by the melancholy situation of her uncle, who continued to play with her ringlets, and to press her hand; but she summoned all her courage to her aid, and hastened to administer such restoratives as she could procure, to relieve his sufferings.

In the meantime, and while Ehrenfried still stood before his judges, the thunders of the cannon approached nearer and more near—and a regular discharge of musketry, intermixed with confused cries, resounded through the streets. The guard who had brought Ehrenfried back to the prison, and who were still in the apartment, showed, by their mute gestures, their anxiety and alarm; but a new feeling of hope arose in the breast of the forester.

"Freedom, freedom!" he exclaimed half aloud; "how does the thought of thee bring back the love of life!"

Agitated by a thousand doubts and fears, Ehrenfried paced the apartment; for, as his sentence was

instantly to be put in force, his fetters had been removed. At this moment the door was suddenly burst open ; and, covered with dust and blood, and with a drawn sword in his hand, the Adjutant Delolay rushed into the room.

“ Away with him !” he called to the guard, pointing to Ehrenfried, “ and instantly execute the sentence ; if we lose a moment, the villain may be rescued. Leave the spy alone ; he is judged already ; death has already set his seal upon him, and spared us a dose of powder and lead.—Away with the rebel !”

The love of life, with all its former power, again took possession of the forester, and with the strength of despair, he resisted all the attempts of the soldiers to drag him away, and Delolay became furious at the delay.

At this important juncture, a wild tumult arose in the passage, doors were opened and shut, and the sounds of rough voices were heard approaching ; and to Ehrenfried it was as the voice of Heaven when he heard German words from the mouths of German soldiers.

“ But the scoundrel who has tarnished my honour shall not escape,” muttered Delolay, as he approached and pointed his drawn sword at Ehrenfried’s breast.

At this instant, one powerful blow shattered the door of the prison, which was bolted within, and before Delolay could execute his bloody purpose, he himself and his companions were overpowered and made prisoners by a number of soldiers, who now filled the apartment.

“Brother, brother!” called a well-known voice; “are you indeed restored to me! But where is Adeline—where is Morell?”

In mute astonishment, the wonder-struck Ehrenfried looked at the benevolent countenance of Reinhold, who now stood before him in the uniform of a German officer. Joy lent him strength; he led his brother to the couch of Morell, where Adeline welcomed him through tears of joy.

“How,” said the invalid, “is not this Reinhold? It is well that you have come; I have expected you for a long while; and now you may marry Adeline when you will.”

Their first step was to leave the prison, in which Delolay and his companions were now detained. Morell was conveyed again to his former dwelling, where he could receive the best medical assistance which the village possessed.

To Ehrenfried’s great joy, he remarked, that there were no longer any French soldiers to be

seen in the streets; on all sides he encountered none but Germans, who were either quartered in the neighbourhood, or seeking lodgings in the houses. Reinhold informed them, that a battle had been fought, which lasted three days, in which much blood had been spilt, but which had established the freedom of Germany. The Great Army was defeated, and almost entirely annihilated, and the few who remained had retreated in disordered flight towards the Rhine.

Adeline showed a pensive tenderness towards her lover. The horrors of the past, in which she had participated along with her unhappy uncle, had rendered her heart incapable of a serene and undisturbed enjoyment.

The physician who was called to the invalid, pronounced his situation extremely critical.

“Hope,” he said, “for the present, he could not give; but the ninth day would be the crisis, which would determine his fate.”

Whilst Morell lay in an unquiet slumber, Reinhold gave Adeline and Ehrenfried a full and satisfactory explanation of many things which had lately occurred, and which, till now, had remained inexplicable to them, and they learnt, with surprise, that it was not Morell, but Thomas the

miner, in whom Ehrenfried had so incautiously confided, who had betrayed them.

The miner knew Delolay personally; for it was he, who, in furtherance of the enterprise on the Rhine Bridge, had artfully stolen the order with which Ehrenfried deceived the guard. He soon found an opportunity of meeting with the enraged Frenchman, to whom, for a considerable sum of money, he sold the secret of Ehrenfried's retreat.

After a few days, however, the miner repented of his treachery to his friend and countryman, and hastened to the cottage of Frau Martha, to whom he related everything, and delivered the letter of her son. This intelligence caused great misery to the good widow, and the affectionate Else; for the moment Reinhold had freed his mother from the unwelcome visit of the gendarmes, he had again left his home, for the seat of war, where he hoped to find Morell, with whose designs he was well acquainted. Meanwhile he learnt that the monarch whom he served had publicly joined the allies against France. In consequence of this, he altered his intentions, and instantly repaired to the residence of the secretary, from whom he requested and obtained permission to serve as a

volunteer in the army, which had already taken the field against France, in whose pay Morell was, and which he had in vain attempted to join. By these means, he hoped to serve both his country and his love, and from the powerful recommendations with which he was furnished, he had not the smallest doubt of the success of his plan. Immediately upon his arrival at head-quarters he was ordered to join and take the command of a troop which was encamped at some distance. In vain were all his attempts to gain some trace of his brother, and such was the difficulty of getting any intelligence conveyed to his mother, that she was still in ignorance of his present abode and occupation. A short time after, Thomas the miner made his appearance late one evening; and in the expectation of again profiting by his treachery against friendship, made a full disclosure of everything. This intelligence filled the soul of Reinhold with affright and agony, when he thought on the danger which surrounded Morell, his brother, and his beloved Adeline. After much trouble and innumerable difficulties, he at length obtained permission to join that division of the army which was nearest the abode of his beloved, and to make the attack on that side. How he and his victorious companions stormed

the little village, and rescued his devoted brother, in his greatest need, has already been shown. Enough, the brothers had met again, and Adeline was restored to the arms of her lover, and if her beautiful eyes were still dimmed with tears, these were shed for the poor brother of her departed mother, in whose present sufferings she deeply sympathized. It now became necessary for Reinhold to separate again from Adeline, whom he wished to leave to Ehrenfried's protecting care; but the latter said, "I too must go forth to fight and conquer the enemies of my country. I cannot remain behind—I go with you."

"You are right," replied Reinhold, after a moment's reflection; "and it is culpable in me to wish to deprive my country of so bold and brave a warrior."

He now held a consultation with the physician, who assured him, that even should Morell recover, which at present appeared highly improbable, it would still be long ere he would be able to leave his apartment, and that a continuation of their journey was not to be thought of till after the lapse of many months. This being the case, Reinhold gave Adeline to the care of the hostess, a worthy, respectable matron, and entreated her

to guard and protect her, as the dearest treasure of his heart.

“ I shall guard her as if she were my own daughter,” said the worthy woman; “ no evil shall reach her as long as she is under my roof.”

Heavily and grievously passed the hour of separation, but Adeline bore this trial as she had done many others. She now devoted herself to the care of her uncle ; but all the physician’s skill, and all the unremitting attentions of the maiden, were unavailing in protracting the fast-ebbing life of the invalid.

On the evening of the ninth day, Morell broke out into the most fearful paroxysms of fever, after which he fell into a deep sleep, from which he awoke about midnight, and after looking around him with a clear and quiet eye, which indicated a restoration to reason, he said with a weak voice, —“ Adeline, I have had a long and sorrowful dream, and now I feel that in a few moments, death will claim his victim. I have often done wrong to you and to others ; forgive me, and implore Reinhold to forgive me also. Be happy with him when I am no more, and do not curse me.”

With a deep sigh he sunk back upon his couch and expired. The weeping Adeline knelt by the

body of her uncle, and on her knees implored mercy for his departed soul.

It was with great difficulty that the physician prevailed on the unhappy maiden to retire to another apartment, where he gave her in charge to the compassionate hostess, whose consoling attentions somewhat composed her.

No sooner were the remains of her uncle consigned to their last earthly habitation, and laid in the cold grave, than Adeline began to reflect on the sadness and uncertainty of her situation ; and she could scarcely refrain from reproaching Reinhold for leaving her alone and unprotected among strangers, but the next moment she withdrew this accusation, and asked forgiveness of the beloved of her heart.

“ Adeline, my daughter !” exclaimed a friendly voice ; and Adeline sunk into the arms of Frau Martha, who with Else had entered the apartment unobserved by the disconsolate maiden. Reinhold had confided all to his good mother, and sent her in haste to comfort his beloved in her affliction.

The sorrows of Adeline’s heart were soothed, and she gratefully accepted a refuge with the mother of her Reinhold. With feelings of gratitude she bid farewell to the good hostess, un-

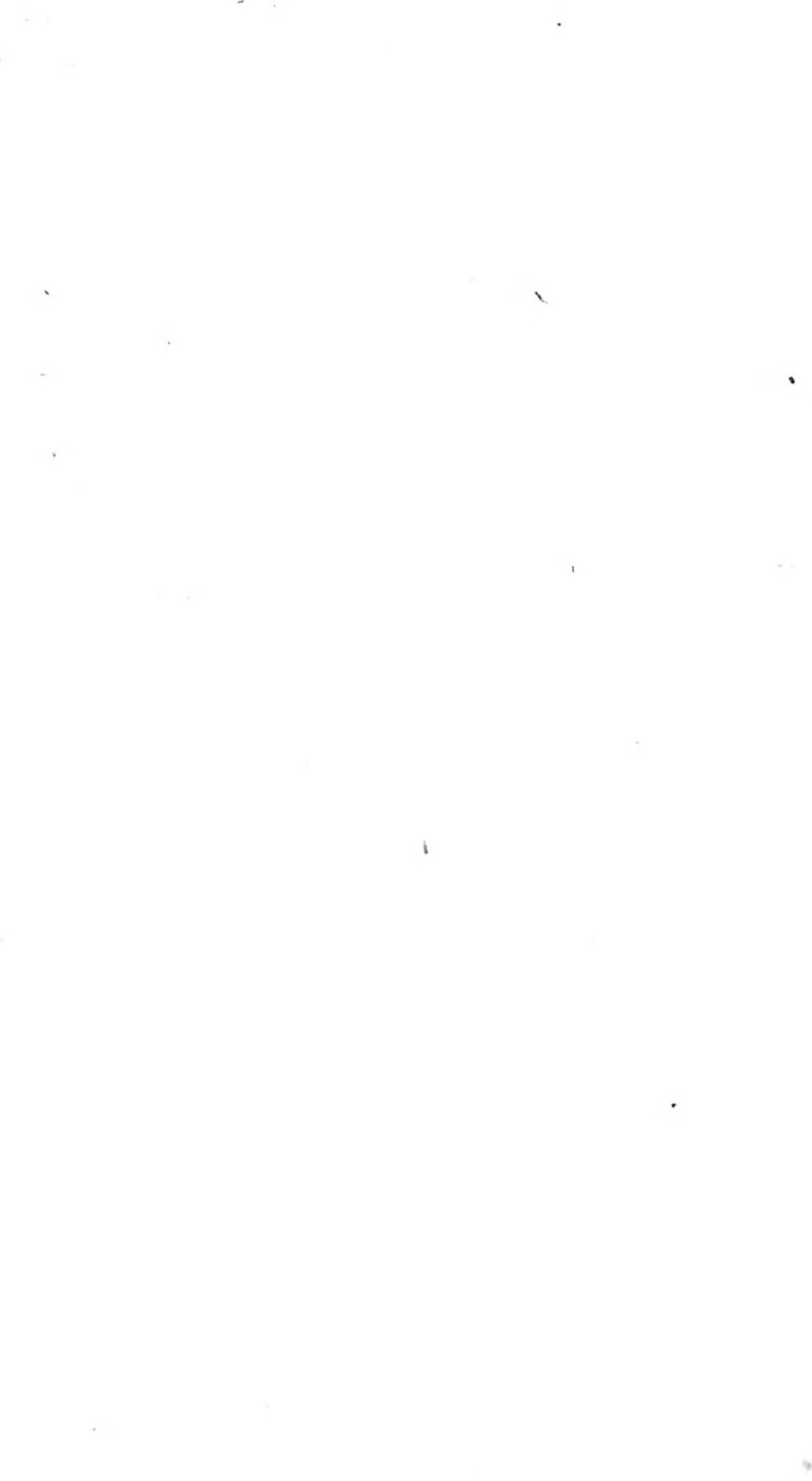
der whose roof she had passed such an important part of her life, and with newly awakened hopes she departed with Frau Martha and Else, whom she soon began to love as a sister, for the rural and peaceful cottage in the Black Forest. The voice of war now ceased, the blessing of peace again descended from Heaven, and the German warriors, who had struggled in the sacred cause, once more returned to their homes. On a beautiful summer morning, when the Black Forest was again clothed with foliage, and the meadows were decked in all the sweets of spring, a joyful procession was seen to issue from the house, led by the pious Frau Martha. These were Reinhold and Adeline, Ehrenfried and Else, who were on their way to receive the blessing of the Church. This was soon accomplished, and after the ceremony, the happy party returned to the cottage, before which a travelling carriage stood, into which Reinhold handed the weeping and agitated Adeline; and they quickly disappeared round the same corner of the road, from which his beloved bride had formerly vanished. With streaming eyes, Frau Martha looked after her son, whose Prince had called him to an important situation, which forced him to leave her; while Ehrenfried, pressing his

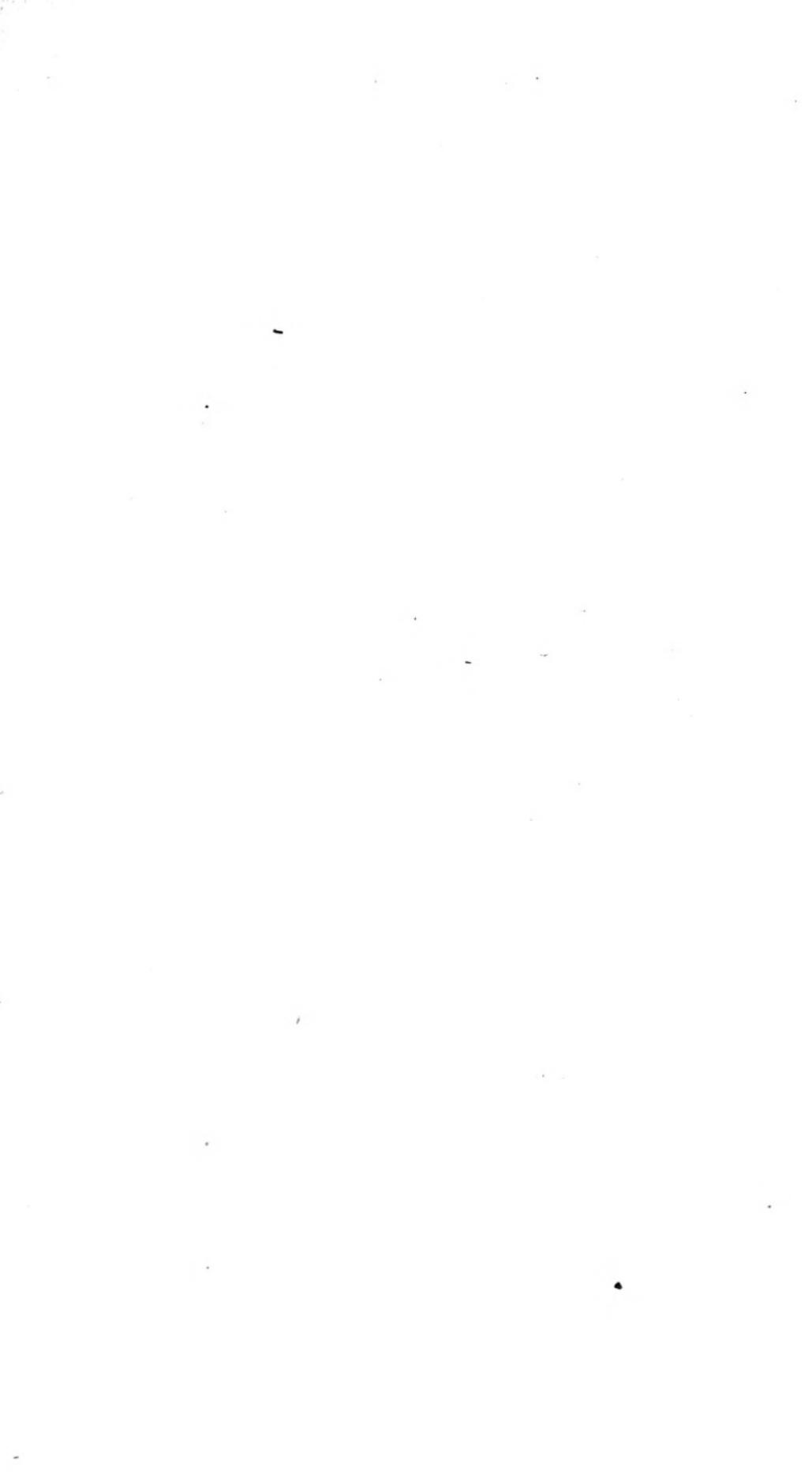
young bride to his heart, said—"My happiness is greater than I deserve; but, by Heaven, you shall not repent of your affection, for from this moment I shall become a domestic husband, a tender son." And he fulfilled his promises, and Reinhold and Adeline, Ehrenfried and Else, continued to enjoy the greatest bliss which this life affords—united affection and domestic peace. The blessing of Heaven was with them, and lovely children played around the knees of their grateful and happy parents.

END OF VOLUME FIRST.

EDINBURGH:

PRINTED BY BALLANTYNE & CO.











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